GRAETZ

POPULAR

HISTORY

OF THE

JEWS

Vol. 3

POPULAR
HISTORY OF THE JEWS

BY

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WITH A SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME OF RECENT EVENTS

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VOL. III

FROM THE COMING OF THE JEWS UNDER THE DOMINATION OF THE ISLAM (640 C. E.) TO THEIR FIRST EXPULSION FROM FRANCE (1306 C. E.)

ILLUSTRATED

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THE PERIOD OF THE GEONIM

CHAPTER I

THE JEWS UNDER THE DOMINION OF ISLAM (640-760)

Hardly a decade after Mohammed's death, the most beautiful countries of northern and northwestern Arabia had fallen into the hands of the sons of the desert who, the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, and with the slogan, "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet," swept everything before them. Though no mighty, heroic personality stood at the head of the Arabian bands, the Mohammedans conquered everything with greater rapidity than the columns of the Macedonian Alexander. Persia, tottering with the weakness of age, succumbed to the first shock; and the Byzantine provinces of Palestine, Syria and Egypt, the population of which displayed but little attachment to the court of Constantinople, did not offer the slightest resistance to the onrush of the Arabs. Medina, an oasis in the great wilderness, a spot hardly known to the nations of the earth, became, like Rome in former times, the mistress of millions of people. The conquered nations of different tongues had either to embrace Mo-

hammedanism or to pay tribute. Jews and Samaritans were equally content to be free from the heavy yoke of Byzantium. The strongly fortified Caesarea, the political capital of Palestine that was reputed to contain seventy thousand fighting men, fell into the hands of the Moslems by treason. The Holy City also yielded after a brief siege. The second calif, Omar, took possession of Jerusalem in person (about 636), and the city was henceforth regarded as holy (al-kuds) by the Mohammedans also. Omar laid the foundation of the Mosque of the Rock (as-Sakhra) which became a deeply reverenced sanctuary among all Mussulmen.

This mosque derived its name from an irregular rock forty feet long, four feet high, and hollowed in one spot, which was in the center of the mosque. Omar desired to erect the Mohammedan sanctuary on the very spot where the Temple once stood. and demanded of the then bishop of Jerusalem. Sophronius, to point out the place. After some evasions the bishop pointed to a hollowed rock whereon the Jews used to wail on fast days in memory of the destruction of Jerusalem, and which the Christians as a loving act of piety bespattered with all manner of refuse. In the belief that this spot was the center of the former Temple, Omar himself cleaned the rock and laid the foundation of the mosque with these words: "This rock shall become a house of prayer!" As a matter of fact, this rock was only a fragment of some ruined edifice of ancient Jerusalem. The bishop possibly believed that the rock on which the Jews wailed was really the site of the ancient Temple, or he may designedly have deceived the Calif, wishing to assign a filthy place for the Mohammedan sanctuary. Be that as it may, the Moslems reverence that place to this day as the most sacred spot, as the gate of heaven, just

as they worship the black stone in the Kaaba of Mecca in which they see the footprints of the patriarch Abraham. The Mohammedans, as well as the Christians, paid the most reverent respect to insignificant ruins that had fallen loose from the edifice of the House of Israel, but despised the owners whom they had to thank for those fragments. Sophronius, who surrendered the keys of Jerusalem to Omar, is said to have stipulated as one condition of the capitulation that Jews be forbidden to live in the holy city. The irony of fate!

But intolerant though the Mohammedans were, the Jews of the former territory of Babylonia (called Irak) achieved a considerable degree of freedom as a result of the Mohammedan victories. In their campaigns against the last Persian kings, the Jews as well as the Nestorian or Chaldean Christians who had suffered persecutions at the hands of those kings, rendered the invaders such invaluable service that even the fanatic Calif Omar himself found it advisable to confer special privileges upon them. The Persian conqueror acknowledged Bostanai, a descendant of the exilarchs, as the head of the Babylonian Jewish communities, and gave him to wife one of the captive daughters of the Persian king Chosroes (about 642). Bostanai thus received political and judicial authority, and Babylonian Jewry again formed a quasi-independent commonwealth. Bostanai also received the exceptional privilege of using a signet ring, by means of which he was to give an official character to ordinances and documents. Bostanai must have been an extraordinary personality judging from the legends that clung to his name and that glorified him from his very birth.

The Jewish Babylonian commonwealth that rose into importance again through Bostanai did not be-

come fully consolidated and developed until the accession of the fourth calif, Ali, the companion and son-in-law of Mohammed, the hero of Khaibar. Omar fell by the hand of an assassin (644), his successor, Othman, died as a result of an extensive uprising (655), and the conspirators called Ali to the throne. Ali, however, was confronted by many and embittered enemies who advocated the cause of Moawiya, a kinsman of the murdered Calif Othman. The Babylonian Jews and the Nestorian Christians embraced the cause of Ali and rendered him material assistance. A Jew by the name of Abdallah Ibn-Saba was an enthusiastic partisan of Ali, and proved to the Mohammedans on mystical grounds that Ali alone was worthy of the califate since the spirit of Mohammed descended upon him just as that of Moses upon Joshua. At the capture of Peroz-Shabur or Anbar, a multitude, said to consist of ninety thousand Jews, headed by Mar Isaac, the chief of the academy of Sura, acclaimed Ali and paid homage to him at a time when his own followers were rather lukewarm in their support (658). Ali deeply appreciated this homage, and undoubtedly bestowed some privileges upon the head of the Jewish Academy of Sura. It is probable that the dignity attaching to the president of the Sura academy and the title of Gaon (Dignitary) which he assumed date from that time and from that occasion; and the Gaonate enjoyed certain privileges which even the politically superior exilarch dared not infringe upon. There developed in consequence a peculiar relation between the two essentially rival dignitaries, that of the exilarchate and the gaonate, that led to dissensions. With Bostanai and Mar Isaac, the two Jewish dignitaries acknowledged by the calif, there began a new chapter in Jewish history, the Gaonic Period.

After Bostanai's death, dissensions broke out in his house that cast an unfavorable light upon his sons. Bostanai left several sons of different wives, and one of these was the son of the Persian princess. Because of his royal descent, this son was possibly his father's favorite, and may have been his choice for the succession to the exilarchate. For this reason, his brothers, born of the Jewish wives, were jealous of him, and treated him as a slave; that is, as one born of a gentile captive, who was regarded by Talmudic law as not free born unless he could prove by documentary evidence that his mother or himself had been formally raised to a condition of liberty. But such a document could not be found. His brothers went so far as to attempt to sell as a slave the princess' son, their own brother; and, revolting as this procedure was, it was sanctioned and supported by some members of the academy either out of religious scruples or out of subserviency to Bostanai's legitimate sons. Other teachers maintained, on the other hand, that it was safe to presume that a pious man like Bostanai would not have married the princess without first obtaining her liberty in legal form, and, in order to save the princess' son from humiliation, the chief judge, Haninai, hastened to obtain for him a letter of manumission from the court. The evil design of his brothers was thereby frustrated, but the stigma of illegitimacy still clung to him; and for a long time his descendants were not recognized as legitimate members of the house of Bostanai.

Next to the exilarchate and the gaonate of Sura, the academy of Pumbedita also claimed recognition; and as the mutual privileges of these institutions were not clearly defined, friction between them was inevitable. While the functions of the exilarch were primarily of a secular nature and

those of the gaon of Sura of a judicial and academic character, the fact that the former exercised judicial powers also and that such legal decisions were based exclusively on Talmudic law, gave his office a religious character also, just as the gaon of Sura exerted also a secular influence by virtue of his authority as the chief judge. Such encroachments, however, gradually led to mutual concessions and compromises, and resulted in the development under the califs of a peculiar Jewish commonwealth, with a peculiar constitution, that maintained itself for several centuries.

The head of this Jewish-Babylonian or Persian commonwealth, that outwardly resembled an independent state, was the exilarch who, however, shared his authority over the communities with the gaonate. Both together formed the unity of the commonwealth. The princes of the exile were the political heads of the nation. They represented the Jewish communities at the courts of the califs and of the governors, and were responsible to the Mohammedan authorities for the taxes of the Jewish communities. They received princely homage at the hands of the representatives of the communities, lived in regal fashion, wore magnificent robes, travelled in carriages of state, and had their outriders and a sort of bodyguard. The religious unity of Judaism, on the other hand, was represented by the two academies of Sura and Pumbedita that interpreted the Talmud, promulgated new laws and decisions, provided for their enforcement, and punished transgressors. The exilarch shared the judicial authority with the heads of the two academies. The exilarch had the right to nominate the presidents of the academies, though not without the consent of the academic college. The president of the Sura academy alone was entitled to the des-

ignation of gaon. On the whole, the gaon of Sura and his academy enjoyed greater popular favor than the president and the academy of Pumbedita, partly because of the memory of Rab and Ashe, the two great founders of the Sura academy, and partly because of Sura's proximity to Kufa, the capital of Irak and of the Islamic East. The president of the Sura academy sat at the right of the exilarch on state occasions, was given general precedence, received two-thirds of certain revenues for his academy, and acted as exilarch during a vacancy in the exilarchate. For a long time the presidency of the Pumbedita academy could be filled only by a member of the college of the Sura academy, so that the former was dependent upon the latter.

As the exilarch enjoyed princely honors through the privileges conferred upon him by the first califs, each successor was inducted into office with a certain solemnity and pomp. Though the office of the exilarch was hereditary in the house of Bostanai, the nomination of a new exilarch required the consent of the presidents of the two academies. A ceremony of homage gradually developed. The dignitaries of the two academies with the members of their colleges and the heads of the communities, proceeded to the residence of the newly elected exilarch, where seats of honor were prepared for them in a spacious, ornamented room. The gaon of Sura delivered an address to the future exilarch calling his attention to the duties of his high office, and admonishing him against overbearing pride in his relation with his coreligionists. The formal act of homage took place on a Thursday in the synagog. The two academic dignitaries placed their hands upon the head of the new exilarch and exclaimed, amidst the sounding of trumpets: "Long live our lord, so and so, the chief of the exile; he is

our prince: he is the chief of the exile, of the exile of Israel." The large multitudes that were present on such an occasion took up this exclamation with enthusiasm and accompanied the newly elected exilarch, as a retinue of honor, from the synagog to his residence. Gifts of homage were also given to the exilarch on that occasion from all sides. On the following Sabbath solemn services were held for the new prince. A columnar platform was erected for him in the synagog, covered with costly cloth, that the distinction might be conferred upon him, as formerly on the Davidian kings in the temple, of appearing on an elevated seat separated from the people. With a numerous retinue of honor he was led to the synagog where the precentor, with a specially selected choir, chanted the prayers. Conducted to the elevated platform, the presidents of the two academies bent their knees before him, and took seats to his right and to his left. At the reading from the Pentateuch, the scroll of the Torah was carried to the exilarch, which was regarded as a special royal prerogative. The gaon of Sura recited the targum of the selected Pentateuchal passages. After the reading of the scroll, the exilarch used to deliver an address, though if he were not a learned man he could transfer that function to the gaon of Sura. In the concluding prayer for the glorification of God (Kaddish) the name of the exilarch was mentioned: "May this come to pass in your lifetime and in the lifetime of our prince so and so," and this was followed by a special benediction for him, for the presidents of the academies and their members. The names of countries, cities and individuals from far and near who contributed to the support of the academies were given honorable mention. A solemn procession from the synagog to

the palace of the exilarch, followed by an elaborate banquet to the dignitaries, persons of distinction, and officials of state, concluded the ceremonies of homage in honor of the exilarch.

Once a year, in the third week after the Feast of Tabernacles, the exilarch held a sort of a court. The presidents of the academies, with the members of their colleges, the representatives of the communities, and many other prominent men, called upon the exilarch, probably with gifts of homage. On the following Sabbath the same ceremony as on the occasion of his election was observed.

The exilarch derived the revenues necessary for the maintenance of his house and of his dignity partly from certain districts and cities and partly from contingent receipts. But the exilarch had also the right to impose a tax upon the communities under his jurisdiction in case of necessity.

Next in rank in the Jewish-Babylonian commonwealth stood the gaon of Sura, who, as already stated, had precedence over his Pumbedita colleague on all occasions, even when the latter was an old man and the former a youth. The presidents of the two academies were surrounded by a college, the members of which were divided into a higher and a lower order. Next in rank to the president was the chief judge (ab-bet-din) who, as a rule, was regarded as the former's successor in case of a vacancy; and next to these two stood seven representatives of the academic assembly (Roshe-Kalla, professors, doctors), who, together with the presiding officers, formed the academic senate. The members of the college could transfer their seats to their sons, if worthy; the presidency, however, was not hereditary.

This singularly constituted and graduated college of the two academies was not alone an aca-

demic body but a deliberative and legislative parliament as well. In accordance with tradition, the college held a joint session twice a year, in March and September, each session continuing for a month. In the course of this time the members did indeed occupy themselves with theoretic debates and elucidations of a Talmudic tractate previously announced as the topic of discussion; but the main activities of the session were devoted to practical purposes. New laws and ordinances were discussed and adopted, and inquiries that arrived from the various communities were taken under advisement and an opinion was rendered in response. At the conclusion of the sessions these opinions were signed by the president in the name of the college, sealed with the seal of the academy, and sent to the community concerned with a solemn formula of greeting. Such a missive used to be received by the members of the community with as much reverence as a papal bull in catholic circles.

Each of the three heads of the Jewish-Babylonian commonwealth had the authority to appoint judges for the communities of a given district; each community thus stood under the jurisdiction of either the exilarch, the gaon of Sura, or the academy of Pumbedita. The judges, however, decided not merely civil but also religious questions, and were rabbis. The appointed rabbi and judge selected two members of the community as his assistants, and, in conjunction with them, constituted a civil and rabbinical tribunal. All legal documents, marriage contracts, divorces, bills of exchange and of sale, and deeds of gift had to be attested by this rabbi-judge, who was thus also the communal notary. It is probable that the schools connected with the synagogs also stood under the supervision of the rabbi-judge.

The communal constitution of Jewish-Babylonia which served as a model to all Jewry, developed along traditional lines. A board consisting of seven members looked after the order of the community, and paid special attention to the relief of the poor which the Talmud inculated as the highest duty. For this reason the members of the board were styled "Providers" (Parnes). Each member of the community was obliged to contribute according to his means to the support of the poor and to the needs of the community. Recalcitrant members were punished either by scourging (bastonade) or by excommunication. It is true that the thunder-bolt of excommunication, that invisible weapon of the Middle Ages that made of its stricken victims wandering corpses, was not hurled in Jewry so frequently or so arbitrarily as in Christendom, but here also it struck with sufficient horror. There were two degrees of excommunication: the interdict (niddui) and excommunication proper (herem). The former was imposed first, but if the person thus punished failed to submit to the authorities within thirty days, he fell under the heavy ban. The excommunicate was shunned by his closest friends, so that he was isolated in the midst of society, and was regarded as excluded from Judaism. No one dared have friendly intercourse with him on pain of like penalty. The children of the excommunicate were rejected from the school and his wife from the synagog. His dead were not to be buried, and his newly born son was not to be admitted into the Abrahamic covenant. Notice of excommunication was placarded on the court-house and published in the community. But one must bear in mind that the institution of excommunication, with all its tragic consequences, was the only means that could prove effective at a

time when the great majority could not be induced by mere arguments to preserve the religious unity, to practise justice and to uphold social order.

Dependent though the Jewish commonwealth of Babylonia was upon the whims of the Moslem rulers and upon the arbitrariness of its own dignitaries, at a distance it was surrounded with a halo of power and grandeur. To Jewry at large, in so far as faint tidings of the exilarchate had been brought to them, the exilarch appeared as a successor to the scepter of David, and the geonim of the two academies as the living representative of the idealized Talmudic period. The more extensive the dominion of the Ommiad califs became, in the north to Transoxania, in the east to India, in the west and the south to Africa and the Pyrenees, the larger grew the number of the adherents of the Babylonian-Jewish dignitaries. The hearts of all Jewry went out to the leaders on the Euphrates, and their contributions flowed in a generous stream that the dignity of the House of David might be fittingly maintained, and that the glory of the academies might be perpetuated. The Babylonian dignitaries received homage even from Spain and France. At the conclusion of the regular prayers in the synagog the blessings of God were invoked every Sabbath upon the exilarch, the heads of the academies and their colleagues. The grief at the dispersion of Israel in every corner of the earth was softened by the consciousness that, by the waters of Babylon where the purest aristocracy of Israel had taken up its abode, an almost independent Jewish state was in existence. Babylonia, the original home of the Talmud, was generally believed to be the fountain-head of ancient Jewish wisdom. "Twelve years before the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, God had caused

the rise of the academies of Sura and Pumbedita, and took them under his special providence. They never were subjected to the persecutions of Rome or of Byzantium. Thence shall come the redemption of Israel, and the inhabitants of that blessed land shall be spared the tribulations of the Messianic period." Such was the opinion held by those who viewed the exilarchate and the gaonate only from a distance.

The communities of Palestine, however, would not subject themselves to the authority of the Babylonian gaonate, and much less to the exilarch. In Tiberias which rose into prominence after the conquest of the Mohammedans, there still lived the descendants of Mar Zutra II who were the hereditary presidents of the academy of that city, and who boasted of being the genuine offspring of King David and the legitimate exilarchs. The dignitaries of Babylonia they regarded as usurpers and interlopers. As a result, there prevailed a feeling of discord between the Jewish leaders of Palestine and those of Babylonia to such an extent that the former refused to accept the vowel and accent signs that had been introduced in Babylonia. But as such signs were indispensable, the Palestinians changed and reshaped them in order to avoid the appearance of imitation. As the Babylonian-Assyrian system placed the vowel signs over the consonant, the Tiberians placed them underneath the letters, introduced different signs for the division of verses, and for the opening and closing of syllables, and partly changed the figures also. Thus there arose a different system which was designated for some time as the Tiberian system. The news system, however, gradually supplanted the Babylonian one, and cast it into oblivion to such an extent that

the Tiberian system was generally regarded as the only original one.

The Jews in Spain had no suspicion that the revolution brought about in the Orient by the Mohammedan conquests would bring about a change in their own harsh conditions, and that despite the intervening distance they would become closely connected with their brethren of the Mohammedan kingdom. At the very time when their coreligionists of the Orient had achieved a certain measure of freedom and independence, the Jews of Spain had to drain the cup of suffering to its dregs. Some of them were forced to emigrate, others to embrace Christianity, and to sign a statement, at the order of King Chintila, solemnly declaring their adherence to catholicism and their abjuration of Judaism. Nevertheless, the Jews of Visigothic Spain, baptized under compulsion, clung to Judaism with all their heart and soul. The independent Visigothic nobles protected them to some extent against the severity of the king, and immediately after the death of the fanatic Chintila and upon the accession of his successor Chindaswind (642-52), they openly returned to Judaism. The new king was an enemy of the clergy that sought to limit the power of the crown in favor of the church; but he was kindly disposed toward the Jews, and during his ten years' reign all persecutions ceased.

His son Receswind (652-672), who was altogether unlike his father, differed from him also in his attitude toward the Jews. In order to gain the favor of the hostile clergy, he took the initiative in a church council which was at once also a parliament, in proposing severe measures against those who had formerly accepted Christianity for appearance's sake. In his address from the throne, he charged the clergy with the duty of destroying the

heretics. However, the council of Toledo (the eighth) adopted no new legislation against the Jews, but only confirmed the canonical decisions of the Fourth Council, which were harsh enough. The Jews were allowed to remain in the country but could own no slaves, occupy no office, and their testimony against Christians was declared invalid. Those who feigned Christianity fared still worse. They were forced to remain in the bosom of the church, and had again to renounce their Judaism. It was even impossible for them to find recourse in flight, for the severest penalties were imposed upon those who sought to evade Christianity, to hide anywhere, or to leave the country. Even those who had knowledge of an intended flight or who aided in a flight were subjected to punishment. The baptized had to sign another statement of renunciation in which they solemnly pledged themselves to abstain from the observance of any Jewish law or usage. The only boon they asked was not to be compelled to eat swine, since they could not overcome their distaste for it, though they promised to eat anything that was cooked together with such meat. They further promised to put to death with their own hands anyone guilty of violating these pledges. To all this they took a solemn oath in the name of the Trinity. But as king Receswind well knew that the independent nobles would protect the Jews, and would permit those baptized by force to live in accordance with their convictions, he issued a decree forbidding any Christian, upon pain of excommunication, to lend comfort to a secret Jew. Nevertheless, even these regulations did not lead to the desired goal by any means. The secret Jews, or the Judaising Christians, as they were called officially, did not eradicate Judaism from their hearts. In the course of time they learned the art

of remaining secretly loyal to their religion in the midst of perils that threatened them, and to weary their thousand-eyed enemies. They persisted in celebrating the Jewish festivals in their homes, and disregarded the festivals prescribed by the Church. To counteract this practice the representatives of the Church issued a decree compelling the baptized Jews to spend the Jewish and the Christian festivals under the surveillance of the clergy, which would render it impossible for them to celebrate the former and to disregard the latter.

Under King Wamba (672-80) the Jews received milder treatment, and they utilized their liberty to prove that they were not altogether bereft of reason, as their enemies described them in councils and in their writings, because they could not identify themselves with Christianity, as well as to encourage one another in their ancestral faith. Talented Jews issued anti-Christian polemics composed probably in Latin. This freedom of speech, however, was suppressed by Wamba's successor, Erwig. Of Byzantine origin and equipped with the duplicity of the degenerate Greeks, Erwig shut King Wamba up in a cloister, and ascended the throne himself (680). To legitimatize his usurpation, Erwig found it necessary to make many concessions to the clergy, and handed the Jews over to them as a special offering. With assumed pathos he delivered himself of a fanatic address against the Jews before the council that was to place the crown upon his head, and submitted a series of anti-Jewish laws for its approval. The portion of his address referring to the Jews reads: "With streaming eyes I plead with the honorable assembly to purify the land by your zeal from the diseases of degeneracy. Bestir yourselves, I beg you, to put an end to the pestilence of the Jews!" Of the twenty-seven par-

agraphs which he submitted to the council for approval only one dealt with the Jews; the other paragraphs were devoted to the forcibly baptized Jews who still clung to Judaism despite their professions of Christianity and despite the heavy penalties imposed upon them. Of the unbaptized Jews, Erwig's legislative program disposes briefly: they were to submit to baptism within a year, otherwise their property was to be confiscated; they themselves were to receive a hundred lashes, their heads and foreheads were to be skinned as an indelible stigma, and they were to be expelled from the country. In dealing with the baptized Jews, Erwig's legislation reaffirmed the existing laws and imposed new restrictions upon them. Not only were they to be placed under the surveillance of the clergy during Jewish and Christian holidays, but whenever they had occasion to travel they were to report to the local clergy and were expected to obtain from them a certificate of satisfactory conduct. They were to occupy no official position, and were not to be employed even as bailiffs over Christian serfs. They were always to carry with them a copy of these exceptional laws, so that they could plead no ignorance of these laws in extenuation. Ecclesiastical and civil judges were charged with the execution of these laws, and all Christians were forbidden to accept any gift from the baptized Jews. The church council, under the presidency of the Archbishop Julian of Toledo, who was of Jewish descent, not only gave its approval to the entire series of laws submitted to it by Erwig, but added that these laws, as adopted by the synod, be valid and binding for all time. Two days after the council adjourned all the Jews, including the baptized ones, were called together; the contents of the twenty-seven paragraphs of the new laws were

read to them, and the urgency of their strict observance was impressed upon them. The baptized Jews had to sign a confession of Christianity and a renunciation of Judaism for the third time.

Under Erwig's successor, Egica, the Jews fared still worse. He forbade Jews and the Judaizing Christians to own land and houses, to engage in seafaring and the African trade, and generally to have commercial relations with Christians. All their realty was confiscated by the state (693). These oppressive measures drove the Jews to despair, and they made the perilous attempt to form a conspiracy against their inexorable enemy. They entered into communication with their more fortunate brethren of Africa, with the determination to bring about the fall of the Visigothic kingdom, probably by the help of the advancing Mohammedans and of the discontented nobles of Spain herself. This attempt could have succeeded easily, since the state was almost at the point of dissolution on account of dissensions, unnatural vices, and weakness. But the conspiracy of the Jews was betrayed prematurely, and heavy punishment was wreaked not only upon the guilty ones, but also upon all the Jewish inhabitants of Spain and of the Gallic provinces of Septimania and Narbonne that belonged to Spain. All Jews were declared slaves, and were distributed as gifts to various masters throughout the country, while the latter were forbidden to set them free. Children under seven years of age were torn away from their Jewish parents, and handed over to Christians to be raised by them as Catholics. The only exception was made in favor of the military Jews who occupied the passes of the Gallic provinces and who formed a bulwark against hostile attacks.

The Jews of Spain remained in this humiliating condition up to the time of Egica's death. His son Witiza is said to have revoked the harsh anti-Jewish measures promulgated by his father; this, however, is a mere supposition. At any rate, upon Witiza's death the last hour of the kingdom had struck. The Jews who had emigrated from Spain at various times and their coreligionists who had remained in the peninsula made common cause with the Mohammedan conqueror Tarik who led an army from Africa into Andalusia. After the battle of Xeres (July, 711) and the death of Roderic, the last Visigothic king, the victorious Arabs swept everything before them, and were supported by the Jews everywhere. Whenever the Mohammedans captured a city they left but a small garrison behind, since they needed the troops for further invasions, but rather entrusted the captured city to the Jews. When Tarik approached the capital, Toledo, he found but a small garrison there; the nobles and the clergy had fled for safety; and while the Christians were assembled in the churches calling upon the saints for protection against the enemy, the Jews opened the gates to the Arabic conqueror, received him with acclaim, and thus avenged themselves for the humiliation heaped upon them in the course of a century, from the days of Recaredo and Sisebut (Palm Sunday 712). Tarik left Toledo in the hands of the Jews, and pursued the cowardly Visigoths who sought safety in flight in order to take possession of their treasures. Musa, the prefect of Africa, who led a second expedition into Spain and captured several cities in the north, likewise entrusted the conquered cities to the Jews. The Jews of Spain thus came under the dominion of the Mohammedans under favorable circumstances; and, like their coreligionists

of Babylonia and Persia, were regarded as allies of the victors. They were treated with consideration, received the religious liberty so long denied them, were given judicial autonomy, and were only required to pay a head-tax like the subjugated Christians. The Jews of Spain were thus admitted into the great association that united all the Jews of the Moslem empire into a great commonwealth in a certain sense.

With the vast extension of the Mohammedan empire, the inner spiritual activity of the Jews within the empire also expanded. The first califs of the Ommiad dynasty, because of their constant warfare with the descendants of Mohammed, with the fanatic worshippers of the letter of the Koran, and with the adherents of the imamate (the high-priesthood), were generally free from the narrowness and the intolerance which characterized Mohammed and the first two califs, Abu-Bekr and Omar. The Ommiad califs ignored the restrictions which Omar had imposed upon the Jews and Christians. Moawiya, Yazid I, Abdal-Malik, Walid I and Suleiman (566-717) were influenced by secular rather than ecclesiastical motives, possessed larger vision, and paid little attention to the narrow prescriptions of the Koran and the traditions (Sunna). They were lovers of Arabic poetry (Abdal-Malik was a poet himself), cherished science, and rewarded the men of the pen as the men of the sword. The Jews of the Arabic countries, free from all oppression, soon acquired the Arabic tongue, akin in many roots and formations to the Hebrew which was more or less familiar to them. The enthusiasm which the Arabians displayed for their language and their poetry, and the care which they bestowed upon them in order to render them pure, symmetric and melodious reacted upon the

Jews, and taught them to purify their own language. In the course of the six centuries since the fall of Jerusalem, the Jews had lost the sense of beauty and grace of expression, and elegance of style had become a matter of indifference to them. With a halting tongue, a mixture of Hebrew, Chaldaic and corrupt Greek, they were unable to produce a literature, and, least of all, to captivate the fastidious muse of poetry. The Jews of Arabia alone, as already indicated, formed the exception. Having learned the art of poetic expression from their neighbors, the Jewish tribes of Kainuke and Nadir who had migrated to Palestine and Syria, and the Jews of Khaibar and Wadi al-Kura who were transplanted in the region of Kufa and in the center of the gaonate brought with them the taste and love for the poetic Arabic tongue to their new home, and imparted their spirit to their coreligionists. Hardly half a century after the Arabic conquest of Palestine and of Persia, a Babylonian Jew had mastered the Arabic language sufficiently to utilize it for literary purposes. The Jewish physician Messerjawaih of Bassora translated into Arabic a treatise on medicine written in Syriac by the presbyter Aaron (about 683). Henceforth, the Jews, like the Syrian Christians, became the intermediaries of a scientific literature for the Arabs.

The enthusiasm of the Arabs for their language and the Koran aroused a similar feeling in the hearts of the Jews for the Hebrew tongue and their sacred literature. Moreover, the Jews felt impelled to gain a closer familiarity with sacred writ in order to be in a position to reply intelligently to the challenge of the Mohammedans. Just as the followers of the gospel claimed that the coming of Christ was indicated in the Old Testament, the followers of the Koran, and with equal title, main-

tained that the coming of Mohammed and his revelation were indicated and foretold in the Pentateuch. Absurd as these proofs were, the Jews, in their polemics with the Mohammedans, were compelled to provide themselves with counter-proofs, and had to turn to the original source of the Bible and to acquire a thorough knowledge of it. The invention of the vocal points for the text facilitated the study of the Holy Writ.

The immediate result of the more widely diffused knowledge of the Hebrew language, the closer familiarity with the sacred writings and the contact with the Arabs was the birth of a Neo-Hebraic poetry. Poetic spirits felt impelled to express their thoughts in Hebrew in metric form and in measured verses, as the Arabs did in their tongue. But while the Arabic poets sang of the sword, of knighthood, of unbridled love, bewailed the loss of transient possessions, and wounded antagonists with shafts of satire whom they were powerless to reach with the sword, the newly awakened Hebrew poesy deemed only one subject worthy of eulogy: God and His providence, and only one subject worthy of elegy: the misery of the Jewish nation and its sorrows. Widely different in form and in content though the newly born Hebrew poetry was from the poetry of the Bible, they had a common keynote. The psalm of praise and the soul-stirring song of lamentation were the models of the new Jewish poets.

External necessity proved of great advantage to this longing for poetic expression. The original form of divine worship, with its simple and short prayers, sufficed no longer. Though expanded by the recitation of psalms and by a few liturgical compositions, the original form of the service did not suffice to fill the time which the congregation

was eager to spend in the house of God. The profound devotion which stirred the hearts of the worshippers on the solemn days of the New Year and the Day of Atonement, sacred occasions when the congregations spent the greater part of the day in the synagog pleading for the forgiveness of sin and for redemption, particularly demanded an elaboration of the service and an abundance of material for the expression of devotion. This necessity gave birth to the synagogal poetry called *payyetanic*. As far as is known now, the first of these neo-Hebraic poets was José ben José ha-Yathom.* One of the longer poems of this *payyetan* is devoted to the description of the ancient order of service in the Temple on the Day of Atonement. It is a sort of a liturgical epic which sings of the creation of the universe and of man, the fall of Adam and Eve, Abraham's knowledge of God, the selection of his descendants as the people of God, and the call of the House of Aaron to the temple service. This liturgic poem unrolls a beautiful chapter from the past which always struck a responsive chord in the hearts of the Jewish people. José ben José's poetry lacks neither sublimity of thought nor nobility of expression, and his compositions for the New Year and his Temple Epic became integral parts of the service and served as models. His verses are as yet devoid of rime and metre. The only artistic forms evidenced in his poetic compositions is the alphabetic acrostic modeled after several psalms. In the early productions of the neo-Hebraic poetry, the form was subordinated to the subject matter; but the more familiar the Jews became with Arabic poetry, the more readily they adopted its forms, and introduced

* Little is known of his life. He was possibly a Palestinian and was a contemporary of the first Geonim. Rab.

the melody of the rime into neo-Hebraic poetry. As far as it is known, the first neo-Hebraic poet to introduce the rime into payyetanic poetry was Yannai, probably a Palestinian, who composed rimed prayers for the extraordinary Sabbaths that have a higher significance either because of historic reminiscences connected with them or because of their proximity to the festivals. Yannai's compositions, however, have little poetic value outside of their form.

The most prolific payyetanic poet was Eleazer Kalir (or Kaliri, of Kiryat Sefer?), a disciple of Yannai's, whose numerous compositions are written in rimes but are cumbersome, harsh and obscure. He composed more than one hundred and fifty liturgic pieces; hymns for the festivals, penitential prayers for the holy days, lamentations for the chief fast days, and other kinds that defy classification. There is a great deal of artificialness in his verses; but few of his compositions possess any poetic value. To surmount the difficulties involved in his allusions to the Haggadah, in the employment of rime and of the alphabetic acrostic, and in the acrostic of his own name, Kalir had to do violence to the Hebrew language, to defy the use of words and to create unheard-of word formations. Instead of presenting a word-painted picture, he produces an obscure puzzle incapable of solution without a profound familiarity with the haggadic literature. Nevertheless, Kalir's compositions succeeded in finding an abiding place in the liturgy of the Babylonian, Italian, German and French communities. The Spanish Jews alone, with their fine tact for language, rejected his compositions. Kalir became celebrated as the chief creator of the payyetanic literature, and legend glorified his name.

The introduction of the payyetanic compositions

into the liturgy changed the character of synagogal worship completely. The translations of the scriptural passages read from the scroll, and the discourses delivered in a jargon consisting of Hebrew, Chaldaic and Greek, which became meaningless to the Jews of the Islamic empire, gradually disappeared from the service of the synagog, and were superseded by the poetic compositions (piyyutim), since the latter served the same purpose, and had a poetic tinge in addition. The synagog service received a wider expansion thereby: the precentor supplanted the preacher. The chant was introduced into the synagog, and the poetic compositions were not recited but were chanted. Certain melodies that appealed to the congregations attached themselves permanently to certain liturgical compositions and became traditional in the synagog.

The return to the Bible had rekindled the flame of poetry; at the same time, however, it also fanned a wild conflagration that at first threatened havoc and confusion but finally proved a blessing in purifying the atmosphere. The impulse to the movement that split the Jewish communities of the east and of the west into two camps had its origin in the contrast presented by the habits of the liberty-loving Jews who had been exiled from Arabia to the cramping form of Talmudic Judaism. The Banu-Kainuka, the Nadhirites, and the Khaibarites who had settled in Babylonia and in Palestine felt strange and uncomfortable in their new environment, in the proximity of the Talmudic schools.

The Talmud dominated all Jewry. The zeal of the amoraim, their saboraic successors and the geonim created, as it were, a Talmudic atmosphere. Every detail of life was regulated by Talmudic rule. As a result of the extension of Islam from India to Spain and from the Caucasus to a considerable por-

tion of Africa the dominion of the Talmud also extended beyond its original boundaries. The most distant countries set themselves in communication with the gaonate, consulted it on religious, moral and civil questions, and acted upon its decisions based on Talmudic law. The communities of Babylonia, Persia and Palestine did not feel themselves cramped by the Talmudic statutes because the Talmud was flesh of their flesh, the product of their views, customs and habits. The communities of Africa and of Europe were not as yet sufficiently versed in the Bible and in the Talmud to be in a position to judge as to whether the decisions of the geonim were in harmony with the Bible or not. Entirely different was the character of the Arabian Jews who had settled in Palestine, Syria and Irak. They were sons of the desert, men of the sword, warriors and knights, who were ever accustomed to a life of freedom and who cultivated social intercourse with their former Arabic allies and companions-in-arms, among whom they settled again after the conquest of Persia and Syria. Judaism was, indeed, dear to them also; on its altar they sacrificed freedom, possessions, fatherland and fame; for its sake they resisted Mohammed's presumptions. But there was a wide gulf between the Judaism as they practised it in Arabia and that presented by the Talmud and the schools as the binding norm. According to Talmudic prescriptions, they would have to deny themselves the merry companionship of their former comrades and could not participate in their drinking bouts which the Arabs loved despite the interdict of the Koran. In a word, they felt themselves deprived of their freedom by the Talmudic prescriptions.

The Mohammedan sway forced the representatives of the Talmud also to modify some of the se-

vere Talmudic statutes. On Talmudic grounds a wife can demand a divorce only when the husband is afflicted with a loathsome disease, or is engaged in a repulsive trade. The courts may compel her to fulfill her duties to her husband even when the wife entertains an insuperable aversion to him, and she is threatened with the loss of her dower rights if she insists upon a divorce. The sway of Islam brought about a change in this connection. As the Koran raised the status of woman somewhat and granted the wife the right to sue for a divorce, discontented Jewish wives turned to Mohammedan courts and obtained a divorce without the loss of their rights. Excommunication and anathemas could not be applied in such cases. As a result, the geonim of both schools, Huna and Mar Rabbah, reluctantly felt necessitated to abrogate in part the Talmudic laws of divorce and to grant the wife the right to sue for divorce without prejudice to her property rights (about 709). This placed the husband and the wife on terms of equality before the law, but the infallibility of the Talmud was thus partially shaken. As the Arabic Jews who had migrated to Syria came in frequent touch with the Mohammedans and were often involved with them in polemics as to whether Judaism was eternal or had been abrogated by Islam, and as a consequence had to consult the Bible for arguments against their opponents, it may have become evident to them that some prescriptions that emanated from the Talmud and the academies as religious laws were not based upon the Bible. It was therefore from the communities of Syria * that an antipathy to the Talmudic law first manifested itself.

* It is more probable that the opposition to the Talmud originated in Persia and not in Syria as G. surmises. The founders of the new sects were natives of Persia. Harkavy, note to Rab. III, p. 170. R.

A Syrian dreamer or demagog by name of Serene, who posed as a Messiah, took advantage of this feeling to gain a following, with the slogan of renouncing the Talmud and of retaining the Bible only (about 720). He promised to restore the Holy Land to the Jews, and to expel the Mohammedans therefrom. The occasion for the attempt to regain the long-lost independence may have been the reign of the fanatic calif, Omar II (717-720). This prince who by successful intrigues was raised to the throne from his humble position as a public reader of the Koran reintroduced the intolerant laws of Omar I which the statesmanlike Ommiads had allowed to fall into desuetude. Upon his ascension he wrote to the governors: "Do not tear down the churches and the synagogs, but permit no new ones to be erected in your domains." Omar II was eager to make proselytes, promised rewards to the converts, and forced Jews and Christians alike to accept Mohammedanism. It was possibly for this reason that the Jews were inclined to follow the Messiah and to pay credence to his pretensions. To gain a following, Serene wrote upon his flag the abrogation of the Talmudic law. He abolished the second day of the festivals, the prescribed form of prayers, and the Talmudic dietary laws, he permitted the use of non-Jewish wine, and introduced some other innovations.

This hostility to the Talmud gained Serene many followers. His call reached as far as Spain, and not a few Spanish Jews were determined to leave all and join the so-called Messiah. Hardly a decade after the Spanish Jews had achieved their freedom from the Visigothic yoke through the conquest of the Mohammedans, many of them were prepared to forsake again their newly gained fatherland. It seems that they were discontented with the admin-

istration of the Mohammedan governors. Inasmuch as they had rendered the Arabs material services in the conquest of the peninsula, they may have expected special considerations and distinctions instead of which they were placed on an equality with the Christians and had to pay a head-tax! However, those who placed their hopes on Serene were doomed to disappointment. Serene himself met with a miserable end. He was captured and brought before the Calif Yazid, the successor of Omar II, who put an end to his Messianic pretensions. Serene is said to have stated that he merely permitted himself to play a jest upon the Jews. The calif, thereupon, turned him over to the Jews themselves for punishment. Some of his adherents, repenting of their credulity, wished to rejoin the communities from which they had separated by violating the Talmudic ordinances. The Syrian communities, uncertain whether to readmit them and how to proceed in such a case, consulted Natronai ben Nehemiah, also called Mar Yanka, the president of the Academy of Pumbedita (719-730), who was not especially popular in academic circles. Natronai replied rather mildly that there was nothing in Talmudic law that would militate against their readmission into the community; they should be treated as Jews. They were to be required, however, to make public confession of their repentance and contrition, to promise to live in the future in accordance with Talmudic prescriptions, and were eventually to submit to the prescribed flagellations.

Hardly three decades after the fall of Serene, another anti-Talmudic movement, coupled with Messianic fanaticism, came into being in Persia, personified by the fantastical and warlike Obiah abu-Isa (Ben Ishak) of Ispahan. A sudden re-

covery from leprosy is said to have led him to the conviction that a high destiny was awaiting him. However, Abu-Isa did not claim to be the Messiah himself, but his forerunner and messenger who was to prepare the way for him. He took his mission seriously; announced that God had chosen him to free Israel from the yoke of the nations and of unjust rulers, and is said to have gained a following of ten thousand men who were willing to assist him in the work of the redemption. To this following Abu-Isa propounded a Judaism that deviated from the traditional. He abolished divorce absolutely, even in case of adultery. The three daily prayers he increased by four, in allusion to the verse of the Psalm (119: 164), "I have praised thee seven times a day." Abu-Isa, however, preserved the form of prayer prescribed by the Talmud; interdicted the enjoyment of meat and wine, but declared the sacrificial cult as abrogated.

Abu-Isa intended to bring about the redemption of Israel by means of the sword, and transformed his adherents into warriors, at whose head he rode on horseback like a general. As a matter of fact, the time for such an armed attempt at redemption could not have been more favorable. The flames of rebellion had broken out in all the provinces of the Mohammedan empire against the last calif of the Ommiad dynasty, Marwan II. Ambitious governors, chiefs of disgruntled factions, and finally the Abbassids who had pretensions of their own to the throne, conspired to ruin the Ommiads and transformed the empire into an arena of savage passions. During this period of anarchy Abu-Isa seems to have begun his work of redemption in the region of Ispahan, and succeeded in holding his own during the confusion consequent upon the fearful defeat of Marwan's army on the Euphrates

(near Kerbela) and the victory of the black flag of the Abbassidean, Abdallah, over the Ommiads (750). But the new calif who took up his residence at Bagdad soon put a stop to the anarchy that prevailed in the Mohammedan empire. The Messianic dreamer Abu-Isa fell in battle, and his bands scattered. The Jews of Ispahan had to pay dearly for his audacious rebellion. Nevertheless, his adherents remained loyal to his memory, and maintained themselves up to the tenth century under the name of Isawites, or Ispahanites. They lived in accordance with the prescriptions of their leader, and deviated in some respects from Talmudic Judaism.

The leaders of Judaism at the seat of the gaonate remained absolutely indifferent to this anti-Talmudic movement. They had no suspicions whatever that a new spirit was stirring within their own circle that was destined to shake to its foundation the gigantic Talmudic structure. The chiefs themselves partly contributed to the schism that was to come. The exilarchs ruled with revolting arbitrariness. They removed men who stood at the head of the academies and appointed in their place other men who were not entirely worthy of this office. The ill-will of the exilarchs seems to have been directed against the academy of Sura in particular, and, as a consequence, the standard of scholarship was greatly reduced in that academy. The new exilarch Solomon, grandson or great-grandson of Bostanai, appointed on the teaching staff of this academy men from the rival academy of Pumbedita. He promoted Natroi, a man of little significance, and passed over his teacher Ahai of Shabha (near Bagdad), though the latter was far superior in learning to the former. Deeply hurt, Ahai emigrated to Palestine (about

750) where he wrote a work on religious practice. The exilarch Solomon who had ignored Ahai appointed two brothers to the presidency of the two academies: at Sura, a man by name of Judah who was blind and really unfit for this office, and his brother Dudai at Pumbedita. The representatives of the gaonate either connived at this illegal procedure or assisted in it. Their thoughts were concentrated solely upon the Talmud, and the only imperfection they found in it was its vastness, which rendered it inaccessible and unintelligible to the people at large and even to the sciolists. The blind Judah sought to overcome this disadvantage in part, and composed, like Ahai, a brief handbook for religious practice possibly in refutation of the detractors of the Talmud. It was under the presidency of this Judah and his brother that a schism of far-reaching significance occurred in Judaism.

CHAPTER II

THE RISE OF KARAISM AND NEW SECTS (760-900)

Historic epochs, like natural births, never see the light of day without travail; but the relentless attacks on the established order of things, though conceived in pain at first, finally redounds to the advantage of the established order if it is sound and possesses vitality. The friction of opposition, that salt of history that wards off corruption, was lacking in Jewish history for several centuries, and the religious life became petrified, as it were, in consequence. The Pauline and post-Pauline Christianity proved to be such an opposing force; and because it abrogated the law, and substituted faith for knowledge, it produced in the development of Judaism that clinging to the law, those finely spun ritualistic threads which are embodied in the Talmud. The Talmud, the product of that antagonistic movement, became the absolute authority in Judaism, and almost crowded the Bible out of the people's consciousness.

In the first gaonic centuries the very study of the Talmud degenerated into a matter of rote, mechan-

ical and sterile. The keen current of air that purifies closed, damp chambers was lacking. The opposition to the Talmud as represented by the two Messianic pretenders, Serene and Abu-Isa, left but few traces, partly because it contained a Messianic admixture that left nothing but disappointment behind it, and partly because it emanated from men who were unknown and of little weight. If the Talmudic one-sidedness was to be overcome, the Bible restored to its rightful place, and the religious life rejuvenated, the opposing tendency, hitherto limited to a small circle, must be led by a sober-minded man, clothed with official authority, and must be introduced to a wider circle. Such a movement emanated from a member of the House of Bostanai, Anan ben David, and produced therefore a lasting effect.

Inasmuch as this man brought about a schism in Judaism, his character had been variously interpreted. While his disciples revered him as a pious, holy man, and regarded him as "worthy of the gift of prophecy," his opponents could not sufficiently disparage him. However, even his opponents admitted that Anan was well versed in the Talmud, as is borne out by the fluent Talmudic style which he employed in the few statements ascribed to him. Anan, who was destined to the succession of the exilarch, must have been known as an anti-Talmudist; for this reason the two brothers who officiated simultaneously as Geonim, the blind Judah in Sura and Dudai in Pumbedita (761-764), combined to exclude Anan from the exilarchate, and elected instead his younger brother Hananiah (Ahunai?).* But Anan was not alone. Like all exalted personages, he had friends. His claims

*Or Josiah (Hasan). Harkavy, Jew. Enc. s. v. Anan.

upon a principality, as it were, to which at least all the Jewish communities of the East were subject, may have attracted to him some ambitious, self-seeking parasites; but he gained adherents also among those who were more or less opposed to Talmudic Judaism, and who welcomed in Anan a mighty protagonist of this tendency. The party of Ananites spared no efforts to induce the then calif Almansur, who is said to have inclined toward Anan, to pronounce in his favor. The opposition, however, carried the day, ostensibly by slandering Anan to the calif as harboring rebellious designs. In consequence, Anan was compelled to leave his native land, and settled in Palestine. Because of the defeat he suffered at the hands of the geonim, Anan became very embittered against the presidents of the academies and transferrd his hatred to the Talmud by virtue of which those men had attained to power. He cherished a bitter enmity against the Talmud and its representatives. He is said to have uttered the wish that all the followers of the Talmud were within his bowels that he might disembowel himself and kill them all together with himself. The Talmud was all reprehensible to him, and he was determined to lead the religious life back to the Bible. Talmudists, he claimed, falsified Judaism, and not only added many laws to the Torah, but even detracted much more from it by declaring certain things no longer valid which the letter of the law made binding for all time. To his disciples he emphasized the principle, "Search the scriptures diligently."

It is possible that Anan's hostility to tradition was prompted by the sectarian struggle in the Mohammedan world. Among the Mohammedans, the party that insisted upon the necessity of observing the traditions alongside of the Koran (Sunnites)

were engaged in a conflict with opponents who rejected the traditions, and recognized the word of the Koran alone as the norm (Shiites). Following the example of the latter, Anan also rejected the traditions contained in the Talmud. From the circumstance that Anan fell back upon the scriptures (Mikra) the sect he created received the name of Karaites or Scripturalists. Anan wrote a commentary on the Pentateuch, and a compendium of religious duties (Sefer ha-Mizwot) wherein he developed a Judaism in accord with the Bible and deviating from the Talmud. The most significant changes he made were in respect to the festivals, the Sabbath, the marriage and dietary laws. The calendar for the observance of the festivals which had been fixed in the middle of the fourth centry, Anan abolished; but inasmuch as he had no biblical ground for this opposition, he was forced to fall back upon the usage in vogue in the days of the Second Temple and of the Tanaim. The beginning of the months was to be counted, as in former times, from the appearance of the new moon. The leap years were not to follow a regular series in accordance with the nineteen-year cycle, but were to be conditional upon the actual examination of the state of the grain in the fields. This was not so much an independent innovation as a revival of an ancient institution which was evidently impracticable at a time when the Jewish people were scattered throughout the world. Like the Sadducees of old, he fixed the Feast of Weeks for the fiftieth day from the Sabbath after the Passover. In the strict observance of the Sabbath, Anan far surpassed the Talmud. No medical aid is to be given a patient, even one who is dangerously ill, on the Sabbath; no circumcision is to be performed; one is not to leave his house in a city where the Jews live together with non-Jews, one is to eat nothing warm,

and one is not even to kindle a light or a fire on the eve of Sabbath for the evening, or to permit a non-Jew to do so. Anan introduced the custom among the Karaites to spend the evening of the Sabbath in the dark. All these rigorous observances, as well as many others, Anan claimed to have derived from the letter of the Scriptures. The dietary laws Anan intensified beyond all measure, and the degrees of consanguinity within which marriage was prohibited he extended much farther than the Talmud so that he regarded as incest a marriage between an uncle and a niece or between step-children who are total strangers to each other. Compared with this exaggerated severity, of what import was it that he abrogated the use of phylactaries (Tephillin), of the palm-branch on the Festival of Tabernacles, the Festival of Lights established to commemorate the Maccabbean victories, and some other insignificant observances? As a matter of fact, as his opponents justly accused him, he introduced a new and more rigorous Talmud. Anan's religion received a gloomy, sober character without any poetic glamour whatever. The prayers recited in the synagog for centuries, some of which were used even in the Temple, as well as the payyetanic compositions, the offspring of the newly awakened Hebrew poetry, Anan banished from the Karaite synagog, and substituted in their stead biblical citations selected without regard to their devotional import. As the Jews in the empire of Islam enjoyed an independent jurisdiction, Anan's innovation embraced the civil code also. In contradiction to the Biblical law, he placed daughters on an equality with sons with reference to inheritance, and, on the other hand, laid down the law that a husband could not inherit his wife's property.

Although Anan had given a mighty impetus to

biblical investigation, his time was not yet sufficiently ripe, nor did he himself possess the faculty for the creation of a sound biblical exegesis. He himself had to resort to far-fetched interpretations, of a nature which even the Talmudists never applied, upon which to base his innovations. By rejecting the Talmud, he destroyed the bridge that joined the biblical past with the present. Because Karaism had no natural growth, it is artificial and queer. Anan paid no regard to the national customs and to the national consciousness; and inasmuch as his religion was reared entirely upon the foundation of scriptural interpretations, the character of Karaism proved vague and unstable; a better or a worse biblical interpretation might call a religious practice in question, and might render the legal illegal or the reverse. Anan displayed as little appreciation of poetry as he did for history. The sacred prophetic and poetic literature he utilized solely for the purpose of deducting this or that law, this or that religious practice. He closed the gates of the sanctuary to the newly awakened poetic emotions.

How large the number of his adherents was who followed him in his exile to Palestine can no longer be determined. His disciples named themselves Ananites after him, and Karaites (Karaim), and styled their opponents Rabbinites, as a term of opprobrium. At first the feeling of irritation and of antagonism between the two religious parties was extremely violent. The representatives of the academies, as a matter of course, excommunicated Anan and his followers, and excluded them from the circle of Judaism. The Karaites, on their part, also renounced the Rabbinites, refused to intermarry with them, and to eat with them; and avoided entering the house of a Rabbinite on a Sabbath when a light was burning therein, regarding such

an act as a desecration of the Sabbath. The Rabbinites styled the Karaites heretics, preached against them from the pulpits, and did not permit them to pray in the synagogs. The Karaites, on their part, could not find vituperations enough for the two academies and their representatives, and applied to them Zechariah's parable (Zech. 5: 6-11) of the two women who carried sin in a bushel to Babylon to establish a house for it there: "The two women are the two academies of Sura and Anbar" (Pumbedita). This sarcasm which may have emanated from Anan remained a fixed phrase among the Karaites, who always designated the two academies as "the two women."

Thus for the third time the Jewish people were divided into two hostile camps. Like Israel and Judah in ancient times, and like the Pharisees and the Sadducees during the Second Temple, the Rabbinites and the Karaites now faced each other as enemies. Jerusalem, the holy mother, who had seen so many conflicts waged by her sons against one another, again became an eye-witness to a bitter struggle between brothers. The Karaite community that renounced the synagog acknowledged Anan as the legitimate exilarch, and bestowed that title upon him and his descendants. In the course of time the breach between the two parties grew ever wider and wider.

After Anan's death, his followers evinced such boundless veneration for their master that they introduced in the Sabbath service a special memorial prayer in his honor: "May God have mercy upon the Prince Anan, the man of God, who paved the way for the Torah, enlightened the eyes of the Karaites, induced many to return from sin, and led us on the right path. May the God of Israel prepare a happy abode for him among the seven groups of the righteous who inherit paradise."

This memorial prayer has been retained by Karaites to this day. Impartial judgment, however, cannot subscribe to this extravagant praise and fails to discern his greatness of soul. Anan was not a deep thinker. He was altogether inconsistent in his opposition to Talmudic Judaism. He sanctioned the validity of many ritual practices for which there was as little biblical authority as for those he rejected.

The anti-Talmudic structure which Anan had erected was, however, weakened after his death. He had laid down the fundamental principle that religious validity depended solely upon the words of the scriptures. But the words of the Scriptures are subject to explanations. His disciples who took advantage of the freedom of interpretation immediately discovered that their master was not infallible, and rejected some of the religious laws derived by him. However commendable it may be to refuse to fetter the mind with belief in authority and to acquiesce in the traditional, a religious denomination will inevitably suffer were each individual to have the right to undermine existing institutions by a mere difference in the interpretation of a word. The Karaites, however, paid no heed to the disorganizing tendency inherent in their fundamental principles, loosened the bonds that united them, and split into fragments. The more extensively Karaism spread from Palestine through the lands of the califate, the more it disintegrated into mere, petty sects, and gave its opponents the justification for maintaining that a religion can have no stability without authority and without the transmission of traditions from generation to generation.

This sectarianism, however, had its bright side also; it restored the Holy Writ to its rightful place, and rescued it from the obscurity in which it was

placed by the overshadowing of the Talmud. The leader of each sect had to have the contents and the text of the Bible at his fingers' tips in order to use them as a weapon or as a shield against his opponents. The introduction of the vocal and accent signs had facilitated the study of the Bible. In order to penetrate more deeply into the meaning of the sacred Scriptures, attention had to be directed to the grammatical rules, to the form, construction and formation of the Hebrew language. The Karaites were the pioneers of Hebrew grammar; with them it was regarded as a religious duty to become familiar with its rules. Their zealous occupation with the study of the Bible directed their attention also to the condition of the traditional sacred text, and they applied themselves to testing its correctness and to safeguard it from mutilations.

This branch of biblical knowledge, which is partially allied with grammar, was called the Masora, traditional critical notes on the external form of the biblical text. But this masoretic diligence came all too late. Untoward times and unscrupulousness had already wrought havoc in the text, and the Masora could only attest to the condition of the text as it then existed. In the bloody persecutions of Antiochus and Hadrian, the holy books were torn into pieces or burned. When quiet was restored, new copies had to be written, but there was no carefully preserved standard codex from which other copies were to be made. The carefully written copy of the Pentateuch that had been kept in the Temple whence it had been taken to Rome by Titus and kept under strict guard among the other trophies of war, disappeared in the course of the attacks made upon Rome during the migration of the nations. New manuscripts had thus to be made from faulty copies. Unscrupulous copyists, by

their carelessness, corrupted the text still further. By how many hands have the biblical books been written in the course of a thousand years! New errors were added to the old ones; no pains were taken to obtain careful, reliable copies. The teachers at the head of the academies of Palestine paid more attention to the cultivation of the Talmud than to the preservation of a reliable biblical text; nor were they in a position to supervise the making of copies for the communities scattered throughout the world. Verses that were regarded as poetic and which the copyists did not understand or misunderstood were particularly corrupted and mutilated.

The zeal for the understanding of the scriptures, awakened also a conscientious desire for the restoration of the correct text. But when search was made for a well preserved, reliable copy, it was discovered that even the better copies of the most ancient Jewish communities did not correspond to each other. Babylonian and Palestinian copies differed from one another in the division into verses, in the form of words and in other respects also, and these differences occurred even in the Pentateuch which was regarded as the most sacred portion of the Scriptures. It is true that the verses of all the books had been carefully numbered so that none of them might be lost; and yet there was a wide discrepancy in the enumeration. While the Babylonians counted five thousand, eight hundred and eighty-eight verses in the Pentateuch, the Palestinians counted fifteen thousand, eight hundred fifty-two. The copies differed also in the spelling of some words, and in that some words or letters were missing. The Karaites endeavored to prepare a correct text. However, all they could do was to safeguard against mutilation in the future. They could not correct the abuses of the

past, and, in fact, had no conception of the corruption that prevailed. The Rabbinites, the presidents of the Babylonian academies, were still too much occupied with the interpretation of the Talmud and with the decisions of practical questions to pay attention to the condition of the biblical text. For more than a century, the Masora, like Hebrew grammar and the study of the Bible, was exclusively in the hands of the Karaites.

The disturbance created by the Karaitic movement contributed to the diminution of the authority of the exilarch. Up to the time of Anan, the academies and their colleges were subordinate to the exilarch; the presidents of the academies were either appointed or confirmed by him. But when the Geonim succeeded in depriving Anan of the exilarchate, they no longer relinquished this power, but asserted it in cases of succession in order to prevent the elevation to the exilarchate of a man with Karaitic inclinations. The exilarchate which Bostanai made hereditary, became elective since the days of Anan, and the election was conducted by the presidents of the academies. Hardly ten years after Anan's defection from Rabbinism another dispute about the exilarchate broke out between two claimaints, Zakkai ben Ahunai and Natronai ben Habibai. The two academic presidents at that time, Malka ben Aha of Pumbedita (771-73) and Hanina Kahana ben Huna of Sura united to bring about the fall of Natronai and succeeded in driving him from Babylonia, probably through influences brought to bear upon the calif's court. Natronai wandered to Kairwan (Maghreb) in northern Africa which contained a populous Jewish community. Zakkai was confirmed in the exilarchate by the calif. The banished exilarch was so well versed in the Talmud that when the Spanish communities requested him to supply them with a copy

of the Talmud, he wrote such a copy from memory.

Almost simultaneously with the rise of Karaism, another event occurred that had indeed but little influence upon the development of Jewish history, but contributed to the awakening of Jewish courage and self-consciousness. The heathen king of a barbaric people living on the Volga in the North, embraced Judaism, and his court followed his example. The Chazars or Chozars, a Finnish tribe related to the Bulgarians, Ugrians or Hungarians, took up their abode on the border line of Asia and Europe, upon the dissolution of the kingdom of the Huns, and founded a kingdom at the mouth of the Volga on the Caspian Sea, where the Kalmuks live at present. Their kings, under the title of Chaghan, led the warlike sons of the desert from victory to victory. They inspired such terror into the Persians that one of their kings had to erect a strong wall, barring the passes between the Caucasus and the sea, as a protection against the impetuous onrush of the Chazars. But this "Gate of Gates" (Bab al Abwab, near Derbend) did not long serve as a barrier against the valor of the Chazars. After the fall of the Persian empire, they scaled the Caucasus, made incursions into Armenia and captured the Crimean Peninsula which for a long time was called Chazaria. The Byzantine emperors trembled before the Chazars, flattered them and paid them tribute to allay their greed after the spoils of Constantinople. The Bulgarians and other peoples were vassals of the Chazars, and the Kievans (Russians on the Dneiper) had to deliver annually a sword and a fine pelt for each household (or, in the language of that day, chimney). With the Arabs whose neighbors they became gradually, they waged bloody wars.

The Chazars, like their neighbors the Bulgarians and Russians, were given to a gross idolatry which

was coupled with sensuality and immorality, but became acquainted with Islam and with Christianity through the Arabs and the Greeks who came to the capital Balanjar for commercial purposes, the exchange of their wares for fine furs. Nor were Jews wanting in the land of the Chazars; some of the fugitives who had escaped the intolerance of the Byzantine emperor Leo in his zeal to convert them to Christianity found refuge among the Chazars, and it was through these Greek Jews that the Chazars became acquainted with Judaism. In their capacity of interpreters or merchants, physicians or advisers, the Jews became known to the court of the Chazars and inspired a warlike king by name of Bulan or Butshan with a love for Judaism.

In later times, however, the Chazars had but scant knowledge of the cause that induced their forefathers to embrace Judaism. A later king of the Chazars tells the history of their conversion as follows: King Bulan had conceived a horror for the wretched idolatry of his forefathers, and interdicted idolatrous worship in his kingdom without adopting any other religion. Through a dream, he became more determined in his efforts to adopt a worthy religion. After he had achieved a great victory over the Arabs and had captured an Armenian fortress, Bulan decided to embrace Judaism. As the Calif as well as the Bysantine emperor, was eager to induce the Chaghan of the Chazars to accept his own religion, each of them sent his ambassadors bearing letters and rich gifts, accompanied by learned religious teachers. Thereupon, Bulan arranged for a religious disputation in his presence between representatives of Christianity, Mohammedanism and Judaism. These representatives of the three religions argued long without convincing the Chaghan of the superiority of one religion over the other. But inasmuch as

Bulan noticed that the representatives of Islam and of Christianity both referred to Judaism as the starting point and the foundation of their respective religions, he informed the ambassadors of the calif and of the emperor that out of the mouths of the opponents of Judaism he had obtained an impartial confession of the antiquity and the superiority of Judaism, and that he had therefore decided to embrace Judaism. The Jewish scholar who was instrumental in this conversion is said to have been Isaac Sangari or Singari.

The details of this account may be legendary, but the incident itself is beyond doubt a historical fact. About four thousand of the nobles and the wealthy classes followed the example of Bulan in embracing Judaism. This movement gradually spread among the masses also so that many of the inhabitants of the cities became Jews. The army, however, consisted of Mohammedan mercenaries. In the early days, this conversion may have been but superficial, and may have exerted little influence upon the habits and the customs of the Chazars. However, a later successor of Bulan's who had adopted the Hebrew name of Obadiah, took his Jewish faith seriously. He invited Jewish scholars to his kingdom, rewarded them royally, charged them with establishing synagogs and schools, with instructing his people in the Bible and the Talmud, and introduced divine services after the model of the old communities. Judaism gained such an influence over the minds of this uncultivated tribe, that its Jewish converts gave up the evil practice of selling their children into slavery while those Chazars who remained pagan still persisted in it. Obadiah was succeeded by a long line of Jewish Chaghans since, in accordance with the law of the state, only Jewish princes were eligible to the throne. Neither Oba-

diah nor his successors proved intolerant to the non-Jewish population of the land; the latter enjoyed absolute equality. The high court, consisting of seven judges, was composed of two Jews for the Jewish population, two Mohammedans and two Christians for their respective coreligionists, and one pagan for the Russians and the Bulgarians. The members of the various denominations were judged in accordance with the laws of their respective religions.

The Jews abroad had no knowledge at first of the conversion to Judaism of a distant kingdom, and when vague rumors concerning it finally reached them, they believed that the Chazars were a remnant of the ten lost tribes. Legend had it that far, far away, beyond the Mountains of Darkness, the Cimmerian darkness of the Caucasus, there was a nation of true worshippers of God, holy men, descendants of Abraham of the tribes of Simeon and half of Manasseh, who were so mighty that twenty-five nations paid them tribute.

Of greater consequence than the transitory phenomenon of the conversion of the Chazar kings to Judaism was the conversion of gifted Jews of the Eastern califate to science. These men were of incalculable value to the preservation and the ennobling of Judaism in the midst of medieval ignorance. From disciples of Arabic masters, they rose to the position of teachers in the domain of science to Mohammedan and Christian students. In the reign of Harun al-Rashid and of his son Al-Maimun (800-833) culture began to flourish. Bagdad, the capital of the califate, Kairwan in northern Africa, and Merv in Turcomania became centers of all branches of science, such as Europe possessed only many centuries later. The Greek spirit resurrected in an Arabic garb. Statesmen vied with poets for the palm of learning. This zeal for

knowledge reacted upon the Jews also. They participated in this intellectual activity, and some of their services found recognition among the Arabs. The history of Arabic culture includes many Jewish names. Mashallah ibn-Atari cultivated astronomy in connection with the psuedo-science of astrology. Sahl ibn-Tabari, surnamed Rabban (Rabbinite) of Taberistan on the Caspian Sea, was famous in his time (about 800) as a physician and mathematician, and achieved an enviable reputation among the Mohammedans as the translator of the Greek astronomer Ptolemy's Almagest which was regarded in the Middle Ages as the standard work on astronomy. Of still greater importance to posterity was his discovery of the law of refraction of the rays of light. His son Abu-Sahl Ali (835-53) is counted among those who promoted the science of medicine, and was the teacher of two medical authorities among the Arabs, Ragi and Anzarbi.

Even greater zeal than they devoted to medicine, mathematics and astronomy, the Moslems bestowed upon the science of religion, a sort of philosophy of religion (Kalam) to which they attached as much importance as to affairs of state, and which exerted an influence upon politics. The commentators of the Koran, in their endeavor to explain away its coarse reference to God and to harmonize its contradictions, arrived at thoughts that were far beyond the narrow horizon of Islam. Most of the rational commentators laid special emphasis upon the unity of God, and denied the possibility of ascribing any attributes to God, because such attributes tend to limit the divine nature and to multiply it into several distinct personalities. To obviate the remotest possibility of a suggestion of the Christian trinity, the Mohammedan theologians (Motazilites) laid the most emphatic stress upon the absolute unity of God, free from all attributes.

They also taught the doctrine of the freedom of the will, because an unconditional predestination was incompatible with divine justice. However, in order to bring these philosophic doctrines in harmony with the coarse expressions of the Koran, these theologians resorted to the same method which the Judaeo-Alexandrian philosophers employed in their endeavor to reconcile the Bible with Greek philosophy; they interpreted the verses of the Koran in an allegorical sense. This allegorization was to bridge the chasm between the rational conception of God as taught by the philosophers and the irrational one as taught by the Koran. The rational theologians were self-evidently condemned by the literalists and designated Motazilites (heretics). The former, however, gained supremacy; the schools of Bagdad and of Bassora rang with their doctrines; and the calif Al-Mamun stamped the new theology with the seal of his official approval, and condemned the old, naive religious views.

The orthodox, however, were indignant at this freedom of interpretation which changed the entire sense of the letter of the Koran and which removed the very foundation from beneath the naive traditional faith, and they clung all the more tenaciously to the letter and to the plain meaning of the Koran. Some of them even went still further; they accepted literally all references to God in the Koran and the traditions no matter how gross their sound, and created an entirely unworthy theology: God is a body, composed of members, and has a form. He is seven spans long, measured by a span of his own. He resides in a particular place, and sits on a throne. One may ascribe to him the attribute of movement, of ascending and descending, of weariness and rest.

The Jews of the Orient lived in too close intimacy

with the Moslems to escape the influence of these movements. The same phenomena, therefore, repeated themselves in Jewish circles, and the tension between the Karaites and the Rabbinites assisted in transferring the scholastic controveries of Islam into Judaism. The official representatives of Judaism, the colleges of Sura and Pumbedita, did, indeed, stand aloof. They were too much absorbed in the Talmud and its interpretation to pay any heed, at first, to the intellectual movements on the outside. Outside of Talmudic circles, however, the intellectual ferment took hold of Judaism and resulted in a new process of purification. The Karaites, on the whole, followed the Motazilitic (rationalistic) tendency, while the Rabbinites who represented the Talmud, that contained occasionally no less objectionable references to the divine nature, followed the orthodox tendency. But, inasmuch as Karaism was still in the making, it produced new sects within its circles, that held peculiar theories, and differed from the others in religious practice.

A Karaite, Benjamin ben Moses Nahawendi of Persia (about 800-820), introduced the theology of the Motazilites among the Karaites. His adherents regarded him as an authority, and revered him almost as deeply as they did Anan, although he deviated from the founder in many respects. Nahawendi took objections not merely to the human attributes ascribed to God in Holy Writ, but also to the revelation and to the creation. He could not acquiesce in the notion that a spiritual being produced a terrestrial world, came in contact with it, circumscribed himself in space for the purpose of revelation on Sinai, and spoke in articulate sounds. But in order to retain his lofty conception of God, without denying the revelation, he came to the conclusion as others did before him, that God created directly only the world of spirits and the angels;

the terrestrial world, on the contrary, was formed by one of the angels. Thus, God is to be regarded only as the mediate creator of the world. In a similar manner, the revelation on Sinai and the inspiration of the prophets emanated only from an angel. Several disciples adopted Nahawendi's ideas, and, for some unknown reason, organized themselves into a separate sect called Maghariyyah.

While Nahawendi's theology differed greatly from the traditional concepts of Judaism, he approached the Rabbinites on the ethical side, selected some Talmudic laws and presented them to the Karaites, giving them the choice of acceptance or rejection. He laid down the fundamental principle that one need not be bound by authority but should follow his own convictions; the son may deviate from his father, the disciple from his teacher, as long as he has grounds for his deviating views: "Investigation is a duty, and error in investigation is not to be regarded as a sin."

Inasmuch as Nahawendi's subtle views of God, the creation and revelation reechoed also in Rabbinic circles, the representatives of Rabbinism, in order to stem the tide of his theories, created a mysticism of their own, just as it was done by the orthodox Mohammedans. These mystics evolved in pagan fashion a formal description of God, member by member, of God's right and left eye, of his beard and other parts of his body and measured his height from head to foot in miles. But in order not to derogate from God's sublimity and greatness, this mysticism extends each portion of God's body to prodigious size, and explains that his measurements exceed the whole universe.* This theory assigns to God an abode in heaven, consisting of seven chambers (Hekalot). In the highest cham-

* This book of mysticism is entitled Shiur Komah.

ber God sits on a lofty throne whose circumference is likewise of prodigious size. These chambers are peopled with myriads of angels who bear curious names. The highest angel is one named Metatron, and is represented, after the fashion of Christian and Mohammedan mystics, as the original Enoch who was translated by God to heaven and changed into flaming fire. These mystics even dared to place this Enoch-Metatron alongside of God and to designate him "a little god." This mysticism, a compilation of Talmudic, Christian and Mohammedan fancies run riot, was claimed to be a divine revelation. But inasmuch as there is no folly, when it takes itself seriously, that finds no following, these "mysteries" soon found adherents who called themselves "Men of Faith." They claimed to possess a deeper insight into the divine economy. By means of certain formulas of exorcism and of invocations of the name of God and of angels, by the reciting of certain prayers and the singing of hymns, coupled with fasting and an ascetic life, they would be able to perform super-human deeds. For this purpose they employed amulets (Kameoth) inscribed with the name of God or of angels with certain figures. The performance of miracles these mystics considered a trifle. They manitained that every pious man could perform miracles if he but employ the proper means; and for this purpose they composed a multitude of books on theoretical and practical theurgic "mysteries," which are, for the most part, sheer nonsense and folly.

Both this new mysticism and the critical spirit gradually obtained a foothold in the halls of the academies, and these antagonistic tendencies naturally led to tension and to friction. On the occasion of the election of a new exilarch (825), the conflict broke out publicly. The two claimants to the exilarchate were David and Daniel. The lat-

ter inclined towards Karaism, but in spite of that, or possibly because of that, he found a strong support in southern Babylonia. The northern Babylonians who belonged to Pumbedita advocated the cause of David. The struggle was conducted with great bitterness, and each party appealed to the calif Almamun to confirm the exilarch of its choice. But as this calif was just then importuned to settle a quarrel in the Eastern church between two claimants to the Chaldaic-Christian patriarchate, he refused to interfere in the internal affairs of the Jews and the Christians, and issued a decree that henceforth each party had the right to select a religious chief for itself. If ten Jews desire to elect an exilarch, ten Christians an archbishop, or ten fire-worshippers a chief Magus, they are given the right to do so. This decision, wise as far as the calif was concerned, but dangerous to the perpetuity of the exilarchate, displeased both parties, for the struggle was still left undecided. David ben Judah finally succeeded to the exilarchate; but his authority was greatly undermined, since he no longer enjoyed the official recognition of the calif. From this time on, the prestige of the exilarchate steadily declined. The selection of the geonim depended no longer on the authority of the exilarch, but rather upon the members of the academies. This gave rise to discord; party dissensions broke out, as in the case of the election of a pope. Not rarely two presidents were elected at one time, each of whom had his own following.

If Anan's sect sowed seeds of dissension in the venerable halls of the academies, Karaism itself was still less exempt from strife. The fundamental principle of Karaism; the unlimited freedom of biblical research, and the application of the results of such research to religious practice, resulted in the phenomenon that each learned Karaite created a

Judaism of his own comformable to the results of his biblical interpretations. At best, the science of biblical exegesis was still in its infancy; the knowledge of the phenomena of the Hebrew language, the indispensable starting point of a sound, rational interpretation, was as yet scant; arbitrariness, therefore, reigned supreme; each one believed that he was in the possession of the truth; and pitied if he did not condemn anyone who differed from him. This confusion resulted in the formation of new sects that were at variance in this or that respect with existing usages and with one another. The Akbarites founded by Ishmael of Akbara, near Bagdad (about 840), approached the Samaritans, and permitted the use of the fat of animals otherwise prohibited in the Pentateuch. The Tiflisites, founded by Abu-Amru Moses of Sapran (Persia, who afterwards moved to Tiflis) regarded the marriage of cousins as interdicted, and in fixing the festivals followed neither the Karaites nor the Rabbinities. The Baalbekites, named after Mashwi al Meswi of Balabakki (in Syria) maintained that the Passover must be celebrated always on a Thursday, and the Day of Atonement always on a Sabbath, because it is designated in the Pentateuch the "Sabbath of Sabbaths." As Karaism had no religious center, and no ecclesiastical authoritative body to represent its religious unity, the Karaite communities soon came to be independent of one another, and disagreed one from the other in the observance of the festivals and in other customs.

Towards the end of the eighth century, the Jews of Western Europe also emerged from the obscurity that enwrapped them. Favored by the authorities, or at least not mistreated and persecuted, they reached a certain degree of culture. Charlemagne, the founder of the Frankish empire, to whom Europe owes its rebirth and its partial emancipa-

tion from barbarism, promoted the mental and social advancement of the Jews of France and Germany. By the formation of the German-Frankish empire that extended from the ocean to the west of the Elbe, and from the Mediterranean to the North Sea, Charles shifted the center of history from Constantinople, on the border of Eastern Europe and Asia, to Western Europe. Although Charles was a patron of the church, and assisted in the establishment of the papal supremacy, and although the contemporaneous Pope Hadrian had little friendship for the Jews, and admonished the Spanish bishops repeatedly to put a barrier to all social intercourse between Christians and Jews and pagans (Arabs), Charlemagne did not share in the prejudice of the ecclesiastics. Despite all decrees of the Church and of the Councils, the first Frankish emperor favored the Jews of his empire, and utilized their commercial and linguistic talents. If the princes, as a rule, punished the Jews when they bought or received in pledge church vessels brought to them by priests or sextons, Charlemagne, on the contrary, imposed severe penalties upon the sacrilegious clergy when they offered their sacred vessels to the Jews for money, and set the Jewish purchasers or lenders free.

The Jews were, at that time, the chief representatives of international commerce. While the nobility was given to the arts of war, the burgher to handicraft, and the peasant, the serf, to agriculture, the Jews devoted themselves to the export and import of goods or slaves, particularly so since they were not admitted by the nobles to the military, and they had no feudal possessions. The favors Charles bestowed upon the Jews were, in a sense, a privilege given to a commercial guild, and, like other merchants, they were denied only the traffic in grain and wine because the emperor regarded it as base

to derive profits from the necessities of life. This appraisement of the Jews as sources of profit was already a step in advance over the narrowness of the Merovingian kings Guntram and Dagobert, who regarded the Jews as nothing else than deicides. But Charles proved that he was interested also in the mental advancement of his Jewish subjects. Just as he concerned himself with the introduction of culture among the Germans and the French by importing learned men from Italy for that purpose, he interested himself similarly in transplanting Jewish learning to France. His ultimate object may have been to detach the Jews of his empire from the Babylonian academies, and to place them in a position to establish Talmudic schools of their own, to the end that the Jewish money that hitherto flowed to the Orient might remain in his own empire. He therefore transplanted from the Italian city of Lucca, a learned family, Kalonymus, and his son Moses, to Narbonne (about 787) and yielded to them a considerable part of the city. This Kalonymos was given almost a princely authority over the community similar to the power of an Arabic sheik in that city, exercised over the Mohammedans. He and his descendants, up to the banishment of the Jews from France, therefore, bore the legitimate title of Nasi, and the quarter of the city they occupied was called "the court of the Jewish king." A branch of this family settled also in Mayence.

Charlemagne's embassy to the mighty calif Harun al-Rashid to which a Jew by the name of Isaac was attached is known to history. Though alongside of the two noblemen, Landfried and Sigismund, Isaac occupied only the position of dragoman (because he spoke Arabic) he was nevertheless initiated in Charles' diplomatic secrets. When, therefore, the two chief embassadors died upon their return journey, Isaac alone was in possession

of the calif's written reply and of his rich gifts, and the emperor received him in Aix-la-Chapelle in solemn audience.

As a result of their favorable position in the German-Frankish empire the Jews could spread over many German districts, and, in the ninth century, they lived in large numbers in the cities of Magdeburg, Merseburg and Regensburg, whence they penetrated even further in the districts beyond the Oder, inhabited by Slavs: Bohemia and Poland. However, notwithstanding all the favors which Charles conferred upon the Jews, it was difficult for him, which was true of all the best men of the Middle Ages, to treat them on terms of absolute equality with the Christians. The chasm that yawned between Judaism and Christianity, thanks to the Church Fathers, and which was ever widened by the clergy and synods was too deep to be bridged over by an emperor who was loyal to the church. Accordingly, Charles, too, distinguished between Jews and Christians in one respect. In a law-suit between a Jew and a Christian, the Jewish party had to submit to an awful or a ridiculous ceremony. With a crown of thorns on his head and a scroll of the Torah in his hand, he had to take an oath, invoking upon himself leprosy and the punishment of Korah's band, in proof of the truth of his testimony. In the absence of a scroll a Latin Bible sufficed. This form of Jewish oath was preserved in the Frankish kingdom for a long time. Still, even this insult was an improvement upon the Byzantine and Visigothic law, sanctioned by the church, which ordained that a Jewish oath had no validity at all against a Christian.

Charlemagne's successor, the kind-hearted but irresolute emperor Louis, despite his devotion to the Church that gained for him the appellation of "The Pious," showered upon the Jews extraordi-

nary favors. He took them under his especial protection, and permitted no harm to befall them either on the part of the barons or of the clergy. They were given freedom of movement throughout the empire; were permitted to employ Christian laborers in their enterprises, in violation of the canonical law, and to engage in the slave traffic freely. The clergy was interdicted from admitting to baptism a slave owned by a Jew. For the benefit of the Jews, the weekly market day was changed from Saturday to Sunday. They were exempted from the penalty of scourging, unless such a penalty was imposed upon them by their own tribunal, and were not subjected to the barbaric ordeals of fire and of water that were introduced in the absence of evidence. They enjoyed unlimited commercial freedom, and were only required to pay a commercial tax, and to give an account of their receipts every year or every other year. In disregard of canonical law, Jews were allowed to become tax-farmers, and thus acquired a certain power over the Christian taxpayers. A special official, called Magister Judaeorum, was appointed whose duty it was to protect the Jews against any violation of their privileges. In Louis' time this official was a man named Eberard.

One might suspect that these striking favors heaped upon the Jews by an emperor who was loyal to the Church were inspired by motives of commercial profits, for international commerce was then largely in the hands of the Jews who, free from the shackles of feudal service, and from the constraint of serfdom, formed the middle class, as it were. However, the imperial favor sprang from a deeper source. It was conferred not only upon Jewish merchants and commercial men, but upon *Jews as such,* upon the adherents of a purer faith. The empress Judith, Louis' second wife and abso-

lute mistress of his heart, this woman endowed with beauty and with gifts of mind, whom her friends could not sufficiently admire, and whom her enemies could not sufficiently vilify, entertained a profound veneration for the heroes of Israel's past, and an especial partiality to Judaism. When the Abbot of Fulda, Rhabanus Maurus, wished to gain her favor he could think of no more effective means for the accomplishment of his purpose than of dedicating to her his treatises on the books of Esther and Judith and of comparing her to these Jewish heroines. The empress and her friends, probably also the chamberlain Bernhard, the real ruler of the empire, favored the Jews because they were descendants of the great patriarchs and the prophets, and the emperor looked upon them in the same light. Educated Christians stimulated their intellect with the works of Philo, and read Josephus more eagerly than they read the Gospels. Educated courtiers and their ladies expressed openly the wish that they had a law-giver like Moses as the Jews had, and asked the rabbis to bless them and pray for them. The Jews had free access to the court, and came in direct touch with the emperor and with persons close to him. The emperor's kinsmen presented Jewish women with costly vestments as an expression of respect for the Jewish people.

In the midst of such extraordinary favor on the part of the court, the Jews of the Frankish empire which embraced also Germany and Italy, enjoyed also a large share of religious freedom. The hateful anti-Jewish canonical laws were tacitly ignored. The Jews were allowed to build new synagogs without hindrance, and to discuss freely the meaning of Judaism in the presence of Christian auditors. They expressed their opinions without reserve of the miraculous powers of the saints and relics, and

of the worship of images. Christians attended the synagogs, and, strange enough, enjoyed the discourses of Jewish preachers more than they did the sermons of their own clergy.* This would indicate that Jewish preachers employed the vernacular in their discourses. Some educated Christians were so impressed with Judaism that they held the Sabbath sacred, and performed labors on Sundays. They respected the Jews as "descendants of the patriarchs, children of the prophets, a righteous race." Ecclesiastics did not hesitate to acknowledge that they had learned from the Jews the interpretation of the Bible. At least, the Abbot Rhabanus Maurus of Fulda acknowledged that he had learned some things from the Jews which he incorporated in his commentaries on the Scriptures that he dedicated to the afterward emperor Louis the German. In a word, the reign of Louis the Pious was for the Jews of his empire a golden era, such as they had never enjoyed in Europe up to recent times.

But the Jewish race, at no time free from enemies, was certainly not wanting any in this happy period. The adherents of a strict orthodoxy saw in the disregard of the canonical laws in favor of the Jews the ruin of Christianity. Envy and jealousy also hid beneath the cloak of orthodoxy. The friends of the Jews at court, with the empress at their head were anyway bitterly hated by the ecclesiastical party that sought to dominate the emperor for its own purposes, and transferred that enmity to the Jews. The representatives of orthodoxy and of Jew-hatred at this time was Agobard, Bishop of Lyons, whom the Church declared a saint. Agobard was a restless, choleric man whose vehemence carried him to the point of calum-

* Agobard: Insolentia Judaeorum, p. 64.

niating the empress Judith and of seducing the princes, especially Lothair, to rebel against their father. For this reason he was called the Ahitophel who spurred on the Absalom Lothair to rise against David Louis. This bishop schemed to deprive the Jews of their liberty and of reducing them again to the lowly position they occupied under the degenerate Merovingian kings. An insignificant incident furnished an occasion.

A female slave belonging to a Jew of Lyons fled from her master, and, in order to obtain her liberty, received baptism at the hands of Agobard (about 827). The Jews looked upon this as an infringement of their rights, and the owner demanded the surrender of the fugitive slave. Upon Agobard's refusal, the Jews appealed to Eberard, the Magister Judaeorum, and the latter threatened to employ force to compel the bishop to surrender the fugitive slave. This was the beginning of the struggle between Agobard and the Jews that continued for several years, led to many annoyances, and finally resulted in Agobard's removal from office. With Agobard it was not a question of the rights of the slave but of the vindication of the anti-Jewish canonical laws.

In his embarrassment Agobard appealed to the representatives of the ecclesiastical party at the court of whose hatred of the empress and of the Jews he was convinced, and urged upon them to induce the emperor to abrogate the liberties of the Jews. These men seem to have advocated his cause before the emperor, but the pro-Jewish party was not idle either. It seems that the emperor, thereupon, invited the bishop and his opponents to argue the point in controversy before him. In the course of this hearing Agobard was filled with such fury that, to use his own expression, "he rather roared than spoke." Agobard was, thereupon, received

by the emperor in private audience, but when he observed Louis' dark countenance he remained speechless and returned to his bishopric in shame and confusion. But he soon recovered his composure and began to scheme new intrigues against the Jews. From the pulpits of the Lyons bishopric he thundered forth denunciations against the Jews, and urged upon his parishioners to abstain from holding any intercourse with the Jews, from trading with them, from sitting at their boards and from performing any labor for them. To counteract the influence of the fanatic priest the pro-Jewish party at the court obtained from the emperor letters of protection, sealed with the imperial seal, and forwarded them to the Jews of Lyons. A confidential letter was directed to the bishop in which he was requested to discontinue his attacks upon the Jews, and another to the governor of the Lyons district commanding him to protect the Jews in case of a hostile attempt upon them (about 828). Agobard, however, paid no attention to this letter, claiming that the imperial autograph was not, could not be genuine. Even when Eberard, the Magister Judaeorum, threatened him with the imperial wrath, Agobard remained so obdurate that the emperor had to send commissioners, men of highest nobility, clothed with full power, to bring the raging bishop to reason. What means they employed is not clear; that they were very severe is evidenced from the circumstance that the few priests who assisted in the bishop's agitation dared not show themselves on the streets. It is significant, though, that the population of Lyons did by no means take the side of their bishop against the Jews.

Agobard, however, did not cease his efforts to seize upon the conscience of the emperor and to turn him against the Jews. At first he appealed to the bishops of the empire to point out to the emperor

the evil of his ways, in his refusal to re-erect the barrier between the Jews and the Christians as in the days of the Merovingians. His letter to Nibridius, bishop of Narbonne, which has been preserved, is interesting both for the venomous spirit of its writer and for the confessions it contains. Among other things it complains that the Christians never succeeded in winning over a single Jewish soul to baptism, while not a few Christians in partaking of Jewish banquets, found nourishment also in the spiritual food of the Jews. Agobard's plaints found a responsive echo in the hearts of the prelates; and a number of them assembled at Lyons to discuss ways and means of inducing the emperor to adopt their conclusions. They decided to address an epistle to the emperor pointing out to him the sinfulness and the danger of his attitude of friendship to the Jews. As a matter of fact, Agobard's arguments were irrefutable from the point of view of the canonical law, and if the emperor had paid any attention to this logic the Jews would have fared badly. As it was, Louis ignored the epistle, either because he well knew Agobard's malicious nature, or possibly because, as Agobard feared, the pro-Jewish courtiers never submitted the letter to him. Agobard, thereupon, avenged himself by participating in the conspiracy against the Empress Judith and her friends, and by joining the emperor's degenerate sons who schemed to humiliate and dethrone their father, and who had partially carried their scheme into execution. For this Agobard was deprived of his dignity and had to flee to Italy. Louis' forbearance restored his office to him afterwards.

Louis remained a stanch friend of the Jews to his last day, though his sense of piety was deeply hurt and his tolerance put to a severe test by the conversion to Judaism of one of his favorites. The

conversion of Bodo, a man of noble birth and a priest of high rank, excited a great deal of attention in its day, and the chroniclers reported it as they would extraordinary calamities such as a plague of locusts, the appearance of comets, floods and earthquakes. The incident was, in fact, accompanied by unusual circumstances, and was calculated to startle the pious Christians. Bodo or Puoto was a member of an ancient Allemanic family, was well educated in secular and ecclesiastic branches, and became a priest with the rank of a deacon. The emperor was so fond of him that he appointed him his spiritual adviser in order to have him near his person. Moved by sentiments of Catholic piety, Bodo obtained permission to make a pilgrimage to Rome to receive the papal blessing there and to supplicate at the graves of the martyrs. But instead of gaining a deeper devotion to his faith in the capital of Christianity, it was in Rome that Bodo conceived a profound predilection for Judaism. The immoral conduct of the clergy of the Christian capital, that gave occasion to the fiction of the female pope Johanna who defiled the chair of Peter, and their indecent behavior even in the churches, may have attracted him to the pure morality of Judaism. Christian orthodoxy, however, without investigating the causes of Bodo's change of mind, jumped to the conclusion that he was led astray by Satan, the enemy of the Church, or was seduced by the Jews. From Rome Bodo journeyed directly to Spain, without touching France and the court, renouncing his fatherland, position of honor and friends, and embraced Judaism formally in Saragossa where he submitted to circumcision and assumed the name of Eleazar (938). He married a Jewess in Saragossa, seems to have entered the military service of an Arabic prince, and conceived such a hatred of his former coreligionists that he urged the Moham-

medan rulers of Spain to suffer no Christians in their domain because they were harboring treacherous designs against the Mohammedan government, or rather to compel them to accept either Judaism or Islam. The Christians of Spain are said to have pleaded with the emperor of France and with the bishops to make every possible effort to obtain the surrender of this dangerous apostate.

The emperor Louis was deeply grieved at Bodo's desertion of his ancestral faith, but he did not hold the Jews responsible for it, and his friendly attitude towards them remained unchanged. Only a few months after Bodo's conversion, Louis proved again his friendship of the Jews. An attempt was made by evil and jealous neighbors to deprive a Jewish family, Gaudicus and his two sons, Jacob and Vivatius, of their landed property in Septimania, in southern France. In deciding the case in favor of the Jewish family, Louis said: "Even though the canonical laws charge me specifically to protect my Christian subjects, they do not forbid me to mete out justice to my other subjects, even though they belong to a different faith." (839.) It was Louis the Pious who gave rise to the principle, well intentioned in the beginning, and generally applied throughout the Middle Ages, that the emperor was the natural protector of the Jews, and that they were to be regarded as his clients and therefore inviolable.

With the death of Louis the Pious (840), the golden era of the Jews of the Frankish empire came to an end. As a matter of fact, Charles the Bald, the son of Louis by Judith, who was the cause of the confusion that resulted in the partition of the Frankish empire into France, Germany, Lothringia, and Italy (843), was not at all an enemy of the Jews. He seems rather to have inherited from his mother a certain predilection for them.

He had a Jewish court physician, Zedekiah, whom he loved, and a Jewish favorite, Judah, whom he called his "confidant." Legally, therefore, the Jews remained, as under his predecessors, almost on an equality with the Christians. They enjoyed unlimited commercial freedom and the right to possess landed property. Some of them retained or received the privilege of tax-farming. But they had irreconciliable enemies in the higher clergy. They had irritated too much the dignitaries of the Church in the person of Agobard to permit the latter to look with equanimity upon Jewish equality of citizenship.

The most bitter enemy of the Jews was Agobard's disciple and successor, Amulo, Bishop of Lyons, and Hincmar, Bishop of Rheims, a favorite of the emperor; the archbishop of Sens, of Bourges and others shared his views. In a council (848), held by these prelates in Meaux (near Paris), called for the purpose of weakening the power of the emperor and of strengthening that of the clergy, as well as of putting a restraint upon the lewdness of some members of the clergy, it was decided to ask the emperor to enforce the old anti-Jewish canonical laws. They called the emperor's attention to the decrees of Theodosius II that interdicted Jews from occupying any official position; to the edict of the Merovingian King Childebert forbidding Jews to act as judges and tax-farmers, to appear on the streets during the week of Easter, and that commanded them to pay humble obeisance to the clergy; and to the inhuman Visigothic laws that invalidated the testimony of the Jews. In conclusion they emphasized the point that Jewish slave dealers be obliged to sell pagan slaves only in Christian countries or to have them baptized. The prelates, however, were disappointed. Charles was not yet so humiliated as to permit the clergy to dictate

laws to him, and he dissolved the council. Later on (Feb. 14, 846), he summoned another council to Paris for the purpose of discussing reforms in the internal affairs of the Church. Of the eighty resolutions adopted by the Council of Meaux, three-fourths were dropped, the anti-Jewish resolution among them. Thus, neither under the Carolingians nor later was the exceptional treatment of Jews dignified into law. The only distinction that Charles made between Christian and Jewish merchants was that while the former paid a duty of ten per cent. on their business transactions, the latter had to pay eleven per cent.

Amulo and his associates could not reconcile themselves to the defeat of their anti-Jewish designs, and Agobard's successor addressed a circular letter to the higher clergy admonishing them to urge the princes to deprive the Jews of their privileges and to place them in a humble position. Towards the conclusion of his letter, Amulo deplores in particular the fact that Jews were enjoying freedom of speech, that many Christians were attached to them, and that Jews were allowed to employ Christian servants. He also complains that some Christians preferred to listen to Jewish preachers rather than to their own, as though it was the fault of the Jews that Christian preachers were unable to edify church audiences. He also blamed the Jews for Bodo's apostasy.

Amulo's venomous circular produced no immediate effect. Gradually, however, the poisonous seeds that he sowed began to bear their fruit. The dissolution of France into small independent states that owed no allegiance to the king exposed the Jews to the fanaticism of the clergy and to the tyranny of petty princes. The Bishop of Beziers introduced the custom of preaching inflammatory sermons every day from Palm Sunday to the second day of

Easter, calling upon the Christians to avenge upon the Jews the crucifixion of Jesus; and the mob, under the influence of these addresses, that dwelt upon the passion of Jesus, used to arm itself with stones and attack and maltreat the Jews. This disturbance was repeated year after year, and the bishop bestowed his blessings upon the mob in each instance. The Jews of Beziers often defended themselves, and broken heads resulted on both sides. This barbaric custom continued for several centuries. A similar nuisance prevailed in Toulouse for a long time. The counts of that city had the right on Good Friday to slap the face of the syndicus or chief of the Jewish community. It is said that, on one occasion, a chaplain by name of Hugo, obtained from the count the privilege of slapping the syndic's face, and struck him with such force that he fell dead on the spot. Jew-hatred seeking to justify this inhuman practice, invented the fiction that the Jews once did or were about to betray the City of Toulouse to the Mohammedans. This face-slapping privilege of Toulouse was later exchanged for an annual fine in money imposed upon the Jewish community.

Louis II, son of Lothair and grandson of Louis the Pious, was so thoroughly mastered by the clergy that, as soon as he ascended the throne of Italy (855), he confirmed the decree of a church council to the effect that all Jews must leave Italy within a period expiring October the first of that year on pain of severe penalties. Fortunately for the Jews, such a decree could not possibly be carried into execution. Italy was then entirely split up into principalities whose petty rulers, for the most part, refused obedience to the emperor of Italy. Mohammedans made frequent incursions into the country, and were often invited by the Christian princes to help them in the warfare they waged against each

other or against the emperor. This anarchy furnished the Jews protection enough, and the decree of expulsion remained merely a paper decree. But under Charles' successors, as the power of the kings steadily declined and the religious zeal of the princes increased, it came so far that King Charles the Simple, made a present to the Church of Narbonne of all the lands and vineyards owned by the Jews in that duchy (899-914). On the whole, the French princes came to the conclusion that the special imperial protection granted the Jews by Charlemagne and even more so by Louis the Pious meant that the Jews were the clients of the Kings, and that their property and their persons were at the disposal of the kings. Thus, the usurper Boso, King of Burgundy, and Provence presented the Jews of his kingdom as a gift to the Church, as though they were his serfs. This condition of arbitrary treatment did not come to an end until the ascension of the Capetians.

The condition of the Jews of the Byzantine empire was as sad as that of their brethren of Western Europe. Despite the persecutions of Leo the Isaurian, the Jews spread again throughout Byzantium, and especially in Asia Minor and Greece. Some occupied themselves with the cultivation of the silkworm, with planting of mulberry trees and with the manufacture of silk. But despite the advantages they conferred upon the country, they were subjected to all the restrictions imposed upon them by former emperors, and were denied the right to hold any office, like pagans and heretics, that "they might appear extremely degraded." Only religious liberty was still granted them.

But this right also was removed from them by the ascension of Basilius the Macedonian who murdered his predecessor Michael. Basilius was determined to convert the Jews to Christianity. With

this object in view, he arranged for religious disputations between the Jewish and the Christian clergy, and decreed that the Jews must prove the truth of their faith beyond the shadow of a doubt or admit "that Jesus was the very pinnacle of the law and the prophets." Realizing, however, that disputations would hardly convince Jews of the truths of Christianity, he promised positions of honor and dignity to those who would submit to baptism. The sources are silent as to what the fate of the obdurate was to be. Many Jews actually embraced Christianity on that occasion, or simulated such conversion. But they no sooner learned of Basilius' death (886) than they threw off the mask, as was the case in Spain and in France, and wherever they were driven to conversion, and turned again to the faith of their fathers to which they were loyal in their hearts. However, Basilius' son and successor Leo, whom his flatterers styled "The Philosopher," proved even more intolerant than his father. He decreed that all those who had once been formally baptized and are found inclining towards Judaism be regarded as apostates, that is, be punished with death (900). After Leo's death, however, these converted Jews returned again to the faith of their fathers.

CHAPTER III

SAADIA AND HIS TIME

(928-950)

In the countries of the califate also, especially in Babylonia, the very heart of Judaism, the Jews gradually lost the favorable position they had occupied hitherto, though the intolerance of the Mohammedans was far from being as cruel as that of the Christians. The calif Al-Mutawakkil-Mamun's third successor, renewed the laws of Omar against the Jews, Christians and Magi, forced them to wear a distinctive garb, a yellow cloth over their garments, and a thick rope instead of a girdle; converted synagogs and churches into mosques, and forbade the faithful to give instruction to Jews and Christians, or to permit them to occupy any office (849-56). A tenth of the value of their houses had to be paid to the calif and a later ordinance forbade them to ride on horses; they could use only asses and mules. The exilarchs lost their importance since the calif Al-Mamun denied them official recognition; they were no longer public dignitaries clothed with political power, but had to content themselves with the authority given them by the communities who cherished the exilarchate for the

sake of the sacred recollections of the past connected with it.

In proportion as the exilarchate declined, the academy of Pumbedita increased in importance because it was near to Bagdad, the capital of the califate, the influential Jewish community of which belonged to its jurisdiction. From the subordinate position which she hitherto occupied, Pumbedita first raised herself to a position of equality with her sister academy of Sura, and her presidents, too, assumed the title of Gaon. Then she wrested herself free from her dependence upon the exilarchate.

The custom that demanded that the president and the college of Pumbedita pay a visit of homage to the exilarch once a year was reversed. If the exilarch wished to summon a public assembly, he had to betake himself to Pumbedita. The importance or the presumption of the Pumbedita academy was due probably to the President Paltoi ben Abaye who was the first of a line of energetic and contentious geonim, who, like the Christian bishops, were concerned only with the advancement of their dignity and their influence. Dissensions over appointments to academic positions were frequent. In ethical respects, however, they were far superior to the Christian prelates, taking the moral precepts of the Talmud as their rule of conduct. Asked whether a Jew might take advantage of a non-Jew when such an act would not redound to the disparagement of Judaism, the gaon, Mar Sar Shalom (849-59), indignantly replied that the Talmud specifically prohibits deception of any kind, whether the victim of such deception be a Jew or a non-Jew. In other respects, however, the horizon of the geonim was very limited. While laymen were beginning to occupy themselves with philosophy in order to purify their religious views, the academicians persisted in superstition and in mysticism. The

very gaon Sar Shalom believed firmly that evil spirits cling to any one who accompanies a dead body to the cemetery. The contemporary gaon of Sura, Natronai II (859-69) pronounced a heretic anyone who omitted the least part of the liturgy of Passover Eve, such a person was to be regarded as a Karaite, and deserved excommunication and expulsion from the house of prayer. Of scientific investigations they had no notion whatever, regarding them rather as an inclination to Karaitic heresy. At most, they began to employ the Arabic language instead of the mixture of Hebrew and Chaldaic used hitherto in their replies to the religious questions directed to them. But outside the gaonate, in Egypt and Kairwan, a vague but ever increasing yearning after knowledge took possession of the Rabbinites also, as though the Rabbinical thinkers felt that Talmudic Judaism would be unable to hold its own against Karaism so long as it remained in an anti-scientific seclusion. Towards the end of the ninth century a few Rabbinites invaded the domain hitherto occupied by the Karaites exclusively, that of textual biblical criticism, of the study of the Hebrew language, and a kind of philosophy involved therein.

Illustrious among these as physician, philosopher and Hebrew philologist, was Isaac ben Sulaiman (Solomon) Israeli (about 845-940). A native of Egypt, he was called to Kairwan as physician in ordinary (about 904) to the last Aghlabite prince Ziadat-Allah. When the founder of the Fatimite dynasty Obaid-Allah, the Messianic Imam (Al-Mahdi, whose mother is said to have been a Jewess) conquered the Aghlabite prince and established a vast empire in Africa, Isaac Israeli entered his service and enjoyed his full favor (909-33). He enjoyed considerable fame as a physician, and a number of disciples gathered about him. At

the request of the calif Obaid-Allah, Israeli wrote eight works on medicine, the best of which, according to competent judges, is a treatise on fever. His medical works were afterwards translated into Hebrew, Latin, and in part also into Spanish. A Christian physician Constantine of Carthage, the founder of the medical school of Salerno, plagiarized seven of Israeli's works and passed them off as his own (1087). This plagiarism, however, was afterwards exposed by the Latin publisher of these works (Lyons 1515), under the title of "Opera Omnia Isaci." As a philosopher, Israeli's services are not of a high order, but he exerted a greater influence as a teacher than as a writer, and imparted his spirit to two disciples, a Mohammedan, Abu J'afar ibn al-Jazzar, who became an acknowledged authority on medicine, and a Jew, Dunash ibn Tamim who followed in the footsteps of his master. When Israeli died (940), the influence of an eminent personality had already paved the way among the Rabbinites for a scientific study of Judaism in which future generations were to follow.

Opposed as the geonim were to profane science, that is to anything that did not bear directly upon the Talmud, it was they themselves, as a result of their petty jealousies, that made it possible for the spirit of criticism to enter the halls of the Talmudic academies with flying colors, as it were, and to assume the struggle against the irrational mysticism that was cherished in those very walls. Peculiar circumstances produced such a revolution that out of Sura and Pumbedita, the citadels of the Talmud, keen thoughts diametrically opposed to the traditional creed of Judaism were hurled into the Jewish world.

For the exilarchate was speedily approaching dissolution. The rivalry of the academy of Pumbedita made ever greater inroads upon its influence

and its revenues that supported its dignity. The Academy of Sura, likewise, lost its influence, overshadowed by its sister academy of Pumbedita. Though foreign communities still submitted their religious questions to Sura, Babylonia regarded Pumbedita as the chief authority, and its influence was still further augmented by the election to the gaonate of Pumbedita of Hai ben David (840-97), who was hitherto the rabbi and judge of Bagdad, the capital of the califate. It so happened that, towards the end of the ninth century, during the reign of Al-Mutadid (892-902), the Jews occupied again an influential position in the califate. His vizier Obaid-Allah ibn Sulaiman appointed Jews and Christians to offices of state, and the community of Badgad was the greatest beneficiary of these favors. Bagdad had a number of men of great wealth and of influence at court who utilized their own prosperity and power for the advancement of their coreligionists as a whole. As Hai ben David had officiated in the capital for a long time and was very popular in his community, the influential men of Bagdad assisted him, after his elevation to the gaonate, in his ambition of gaining preëminence for the academy of Pumbedita. His successors, who likewise began their careers with the rabbinate of Bagdad and who were supported by the influential men of that community, had the same object in view. As a result, the academy of Sura declined more and more, when a man was raised to the gaonate of Pumbedita who formed the ambition to make his academy the sole center of all Jewry, to undermine the exilarchate, and to reduce the academy of Sura to a mere shadow. This man, Mar Kohen-Zedek II ben Joseph (917-936), was one of those passionate creatures who, free from all personal egotism, make the aggrandizement of an institution their personal affair, and disregard all

considerations in the accomplishment of their purpose. Immediately upon his accession to the gaonate, Kohen-Zedek demanded, first of all, that the academy of Pumbedita receive a larger share of the contributions sent for the academies from far and near, because the college and the student body of Pumbedita were more numerous than those of Sura. This demand produced much friction, and led to a compromise by which the contributions were henceforth equally divided between the two academies. Kohen-Zedek thus succeeded to the extent, at least, of removing the last vestige of Sura's preëminence. Thereupon he turned his attention to the exilarchate. The exilarch then was Mar Ukba, a man familiar with Arabic culture and a writer of Arabic poetry. Kohen-Zedek demanded that the appointment to judicial offices in the district of Khorassan and the revenues from that district be turned over to the academy of Pumbedita. Ukba declined, and appealed to the calif. But two of Kohen-Zedek's influential friends of Bagdad, Joseph ben Phinehas and Netira, succeeded in inducing the Calif Al-Muktadir (908-932), or rather his vizier, Ibn-Furat, for the calif himself wasted his life in riotous living, to remove Ukba from his office and to banish him from Bagdad (917). The exilarch departed for Kermanshah (east of Bagdad), and Kohen-Zedek had the satisfaction of seeing the abolition of the exilarchate. The feeble president of Sura, Jacob bar Natronai, dared not protest against this injustice.

An accident, however, proved so advantageous to the banished exilarch that it nearly thwarted Kohen-Zedek's schemes. The youthful and pleasure-seeking calif happened to visit Kermanshah at that time, for that city had been turned into a paradise by his predecessor, and was adorned with magnificent palaces. In the course of his daily

strolls, Ukba used to greet the calif in well-formed Arabic verses that appealed to Al-Muktadir's secretary so forcibly that he called the calif's attention to them. Poetry was so exalted among the Arabs that even the most barbarous ruler was not insensible to its charms. Al-Muktadir thereupon summoned the poetic exilarch to his presence, was favorably impressed with him, and finally asked what favor he could bestow upon him. Ukba asked that he be reinstated into his office, and the calif granted his request. To the astonishment of his opponents, he returned to Bagdad after an exile of one year and resumed his dignity. Poetry proved to be his savior. But Kohen-Zedek and his partisans did not permit Ukba to enjoy his triumph long. By means of bribes and intrigues they succeeded in gaining sufficient influence at court to banish Ukba a second time. To prevent the possibility of his restoration to favor, he was banished from the entire califate, and had to wander to Kairwan, the capital of the recently founded African kingdom of the Fatimites. In Kairwan, where the physician and philosopher Isaac Israeli was at the height of his fame, Ukba was received with high honors. The community of Kairwan treated him as an exilarch, assigned him an elevated seat of honor in the synagog, and bestowed such solicitude upon him that he was enabled to forget the humiliation he experienced in his native land (about 914). He was the second exilarch who had been forced to wander to Kairwan.

As his combat with Ukba was directed not so much against his person as against the exilarchate that stood in the way of the aggrandizement of the Pumbedita academy, Kohen-Zedek saw to it that no successor to Ukba be appointed. For five years the exilarchate remained vacant. The communities, however, out of loyalty to the House of Da-

vid, insisted that the vacancy be filled, and demanded the election of David ben Zakkai, a kinsman of Ukba's. This demand stirred the gaon of Sura to independent action, and he as well as the entire college of Sura paid their homage to David ben Zakkai. The influential Netira also favored him. Kohen-Zedek and the college of Pumbedita, however, refused to acknowledge him as exilarch. But David ben Zakkai was as determined and as ambitious as his opponent. By virtue of his authority, he declared Kohen-Zedek's office vacant, and appointed an anti-gaon in his place; and a part of the Pumbedita college deserted Kohen-Zedek and went over to his opponent. Discord and dissensions broke out afresh within the academy of Pumbedita, and proved a source of great anxiety to the better element of Jewry. The struggle between the exilarchate and the gaonate that divided every Babylonian Jewish community into two hostile camps continued for two years. A reconciliation was finally effected through the efforts of Nissim Naharwani, a blind man who enjoyed respect because of his piety. Kohen-Zedek acknowledged David ben Zakkai as the exilarch, and David, in turn, recognized him as the legitimate gaon of Pumbedita. Kohen-Zedek's designs upon the exilarchate were thus frustrated, and he lived long enough to see the academy of Sura which he humiliated raised to new glory by a man from a distant land, obscuring Pumbedita for several years and holding aloft the banner of science.

When the last twilight rays of intellectual life died in Christian Europe with the fall of the Carolingians, and the night of medievalism deepened more dismally, dawn began to break in the habitations of Israel. The Church became the stronghold of monkish ignorance and barbarity, the synagog the home of knowledge and of humanitarian-

ism. In Christendom every scientific aspiration was condemned by the dignitaries of the Church and by the besotted populace as the work of Satan; in Jewry, from the tenth century onward, the leaders and the teachers of religion themselves set intellectual currents in motion and endeavored to raise the people to the heights of independent thinking. For three successive centuries the representatives of Judaism were, for the most part, priests of science also; and the deep foundation of this intellectual eminence was laid at that time. Two men, one in the East, the other in the West, popularized the science of Judaism—the gaon Saadia and the statesman Hasdai. With them Jewish history enters upon a new period which may confidently be called the scientific period. Israel's history entered upon a new spring, verdant, blossoming and cheerful. The blithesome lark of a new poesy also began to warble its melodies in the clear atmosphere. The contemporaries hardly noticed that the exilarchate, an integral part of Jewish antiquity, expired. In the stirring of the new life, the dead past was quickly forgotten. As the religious life once disengaged itself from the sacrificial temple, so it now detached itself from the temple of learning on the shores of the Euphrates, entered upon an independent development, and created for itself a new center. Saadia forms the last significant offshoot of the Oriental development; Hasdai and his school, the first representative of a Jewish Occidental culture.

Saadia (Arabic Said) ben Joseph of Fayoum in Upper Egypt (892-942) was the first, among the Rabbinites, to found a Jewish science and the first, in Medievalism, to create a philosophy of religion. He was a man of comprehensive knowledge who absorbed the contemporary culture of the Mohammedans and the Karaites, and amalgamated them

with the Talmudic elements. But even more significant than the vastness of his knowledge was his entire personality which was animated by religious spirituality and a profound moral earnestness. (Saadia was a type of the open-minded soul that has the courage of its convictions and that perseveres in the truth, once that it discovers it.)

Like no other Rabbinite before him, Saadia was as familiar with the Karaitic literature as with the Talmud. At the age of twenty-two he composed a sort of Hebrew dictionary, and in his twenty-fourth year he embarked upon a powerful attack upon Kairaism which the latter could not forget for centuries. He described Anan as a man of ambition "who possessed a superfluity of impudence and a paucity of piety," and who deserted Talmudic Judaism merely out of spite.

When he reached manhood Saadia undertook a more difficult work which was destined to exert a lasting influence upon Judaism. Hitherto the Karaites had monopolized the Scriptures, as it were, while the Rabbinic teachers neglected them because the Talmud was their sole standard for the religious life. The explanation of the verses or of words in the Pentateuch or the Prophets, the knowledge of the Hebrew grammar and of the Masora were absolutely matters of indifference to them which they left to the Karaites to bother about. The Karaites, on the other hand, cultivated this field zealously, and it was their boast and their pride that they were in a position to give instruction and information about every verse, every word and every point of the Scriptures. In Saadia's time, two Karaites, father and son—Moses ben Asher and Aaron ben Asher, of Tiberias—were regarded as authorities on Hebrew grammar and the Masora. They were the authors of a Hebrew grammar, written in a crabbed style in rime,

that is very defective, lays stress upon trivialities and that deservedly fell into oblivion after a while. Another work of theirs, however, enjoyed greater respect and authority; this was a codex of the Bible, provided with Tiberian vocal and accent signs, and with marginal notes containing Masoretic annotations on grammatical rules and exceptions. Realizing that other copies differed from his own, Moses ben Asher pronounced a dire curse upon any one who would deviate from his codex even in one iota. The codex of these Masorites actually became the standard, and was regarded as an original of a sacred and inviolate character even in Rabbinic circles, so that all subsequent copies to this very day bear the imprint of Moses ben Asher. Older copies containing different vocal and accent signs and differing in the spelling of some words were completely forgotten.

Saadia, however, had little respect for the Ben Ashers, and treated with disdain their grammatical rules upon which their Masoretic annotations were partly based. To wrest the supremacy from the Karaites, he composed a comprehensive grammar, and took great pains to spread a knowledge of the Scriptures in Rabbinic circles. He translated the Scriptures into Arabic, which was then understood from Spain to India, and provided his translation with shorter or longer comments, in accordance with the nature of the topic under discussion. His first object in this translation was to counteract the influence of Karaism that gave the lie to Talmudic tradition by its peculiar exegesis. At the same time he sought to destroy the folly of mysticism that conjured up unworthy conceptions of the divinity and forced its views into the Scriptures. His fundamental view of Judaism was that neither the Scriptures nor tradition were in conflict with reason. Saadia maintained that such a con-

flict was only apparent; and he sought to remove it through his translation and commentary. The Arabic he employs is pure and graceful. Saadia wrote, as the Arabic Jews rarely did, in Arabic characters, in the hope of reaching Mohammedan readers also, which he did. His commentary to Genesis stirred up a wasp's nest, as it were, among the Karaites. Unaccustomed to opposition on the part of the Rabbinites, they were disagreeably surprised to see a Rabbinite of spirit and of knowledge enter the lists. A lively combat between the two camps resulted that aroused a scientific interest. Saadia's principal opponent was the Karaite Solomon ben Jeruham, likewise a native of Egypt. This Karaite (born in Fostat 885, died about 960) who lived in Palestine was a man of mediocrity and of a violent, choleric nature, who thought that scientific questions could be settled by abuse and vituperations. When Ben-Jeruham learned that Saadia's written and spoken attacks upon Karaism made a deep impression even in Karaitic circles and aroused doubts among them, his fury was aroused, and he wrote a rejoinder in Hebrew and in Arabic, replete with slanders and vulgarities against Saadia in particular and Talmudic Judaism in general. Saadia, however, was not silenced by such attacks. He was always prepared for combat. His further contributions, an introduction to the Talmud, a translation of the Mishnah into Arabic, and an Arabic treatise on civil law and ritual topics, spread his fame in the communities of the African and of the Eastern califates.

The attention of the gaonate also was attracted to Saadia's name. The academy of Sura had greatly deteriorated, and there was such a scarcity of learned men in that institution that the exilarch David ben Zakkai found it necessary to appoint to

the gaonate a man who was a weaver by trade, Mar Yom Tob Kahana. Upon Kahana's death (928), Kohen-Zedek, the gaon of Pumbedita, who neglected no opportunity to raise his own academy to a position of exclusive authority, suggested to the exilarch to close the Sura academy altogether. However, as the closing of such a venerable institution of learning was regarded as an act of impiety, the exilarch decided to appoint to the vacancy either Saadia or Zemah ben Shahin, a member of the ancient aristocracy. The blind Nissim Naharwani, who declined the gaonate himself, advised the appointment of Zemah. Though he admitted Saadia's superiority in every respect, he feared that his strong, unyielding character would lead to friction with the exilarch who, after all, was seeking in the gaon of Sura only a pliable tool to serve as a check to the ambitions of the Pumbedita academy. The exilarch David, nevertheless, selected Saadia, who was summoned from Egypt to Sura and appointed gaon (May, 928). It was a strikingly exceptional case that a foreigner, without spending a number of years in the Talmudic academy and without gradual promotion, should be elevated at once to the highest dignity next to the exilarchate; particularly so since Saadia's fame rested upon his scientific achievements rather than upon his Talmudic scholarship. With Saadia's call to the gaonate, Babylonia, in a sense, placed philosophic knowledge on a footing of equality with the Talmud. The spirit of criticism hitherto despised in the halls of the academies, made in Saadia its solemn entry. Saadia conferred a new luster upon the academy of Sura by his personality and fame, and during his presidency Pumbedita fell into obscurity. He sought to fill the vacancies that existed in the academic college by appointing to

academic offices worthy men, though they were young in years.

What emotions must have mastered Saadia when he first stepped into the halls of the academy where the great authorities once lived, moved and had their being! His clear vision, however, must have told him soon that of the former substance hardly a shadow was left, that the high-sounding titles and dignities were mere phantoms, and that the worm of death was already gnawing at the vitals of this ancient institution. The exilarch, the very pinnacle of Babylonian Jewry, was without worth, and in constant friction with the academies. Without official recognition on the part of the court, the exilarchate was, to some extent, at the disposal of the highest bidder, and the considerable sums necessary for distribution among the court favorites had to be extorted from the people. Integrity, virtue and piety were not in evidence among the leaders. The exilarch David sent his son to collect extraordinary contributions from the communities; and when the community of Fars (Hamadan?) refused to contribute, David excommunicated it, informed the vizier of it, who in turn informed the calif, and the latter imposed a considerable fine upon the community for its refusal. The geonim of the academies, dared not utter a word of censure. Saadia himself, indignant as he was over several incidents, had to hold his peace; his position was as yet too new. Moreover, his greatness gained him enemies who lay in wait to ruin him. Not alone Kohen-Zedek was jealous of him, but a young man of Bagdad, Aaron ibn-Sargado, who possessed knowledge, wealth, and considerable influence, turned against him as a result of envy. Saadia wished to gain a firm foothold before he attempted to remedy the evils of the Babylonian Jewry, and was silent meanwhile. But when his

sense of right was too deeply hurt by the unjust actions of the representatives of the community, and particularly when he was asked to participate in their evil doings, he could no longer contain himself, and exhibited his unyielding nature.

A slight incident was instrumental in exposing the entire moral corruption of the Jewish dignitaries. Out of consideration of personal gain, the exilarch David gave an unfair decision in a trial over an inheritance involving a considerable amount of money. To make his decision legal and binding, David demanded that both geonim affix their signatures to the document. The aged Kohen-Zedek signed at once; Saadia, however, refused to lend his name to an injustice; and, upon the urgent request of the litigants, stated the reason for his refusal. This led to mutual bitterness. The son of the exilarch, ordered by his father to obtain Saadia's signature by force, if necessary, raised his hand against Saadia. The impudent youth was thrown out, and the door was locked in his face. David ben Zakkai, who regarded himself insulted, thereupon removed Saadia from office, excommunicated him, and appointed in his place a young man who could not be even a pupil of Saadia's. Saadia, on his side, declared the exilarchate vacant, and, together with his followers, appointed David's brother, Josia-Hasan, exilarch (930). At once two parties were formed in Babylonia, one siding with Saadia and one with David. Saadia was supported by all the members of the college of Sura and by many of the leading men of Bagdad, among whom were the two sons of Netira who inherited the influence of their father. Against him were arrayed Aaron ibn-Sargado, his partisan, and probably also Kohen-Zedek with the college of Pumbedita. Both parties appealed to Al-Muktadir, and bribed his favorites to win them over to their re-

spective sides. Ibn-Sargado spent sixty thousand zuzim ($9,000) to accomplish the ruin of Saadia. The calif summoned both parties to a formal hearing in Bagdad before the Vizier Ali ibn Isa, which was attended by many high dignitaries. The controversy, however, remained unsettled, probably because of the many viziers who succeeded each other during the last two years of the calif's reign, and because of the disturbances that occurred in the capital during that time (930-932). During these two years both Saadia and his opponent claimed the gaonate, while both David and his brother Josiah-Hasan claimed the exilarchate.

When the calif Al-Muktadir was slain in an uprising (October, 932) and the poverty-stricken Kahir who had to borrow clothing for the occasion of his coronation was proclaimed calif, the party that could offer the most money, that of the exilarch David, carried the day. Saadia was removed from the presidency of Sura (933) and Josiah-Hasan was banished to Khorasan, where he died later. For four years (933-937) Saadia lived in retirement in Bagdad, dejected by many years of strife and disappointment. His melancholy, however, did not interfere with his intellectual activity. It was during the years of his retirement that he wrote his best works.

The highest expression of Saadia's intellect is contained in his work written in Arabic, "Faith and Doctrine" (Ha-Emunoth weha-Deoth, 934). Saadia was the first to attempt the presentation of an almost completely organized system of religious philosophy. This work, purposed to obviate and to correct the erroneous views of Judaism held both by the unbelievers and doubters who denied all doctrines of Judaism and by the credulous masses who condemned as heretical every reflection about religion. "My heart grieves," says Saadia in his

introduction, "that rational beings should hold an impure faith and confused conceptions. Some deny the plain truth and boast of their unbelief. Others are sunk in a sea of doubt, the waves of error cover their heads, and there is no swimmer to rescue them. Inasmuch as the mercy of God bestowed upon me something by which I could be of benefit to them, I regard it my duty by instruction to lead them on the right road. . . . If someone should object, how can we be raised to the true faith by means of philosophic thought since many regard that as heresy and unbelief? I reply that such a view is held only by the stupid people of the kind who believe that every one who reaches India becomes rich, or that the eclipse of the moon is due to a dragon who swallows its disk, and similar nonsensical things. Should anyone object to philosophic speculations because the Talmud states that one who meditates upon the origin of time and of space deserves not to live, I reply that the Talmud could not possibly have interdicted a search after truth since the Bible itself not only sanctions it but even demands it." Philosophy guided by the hand of faith cannot lead astray; it rather strengthens faith and enables it to refute the objections advanced against it by unbelief.

Saadia's philosophy proceeds from revelation which he regards as an incontestable truth, and he seeks to corroborate the doctrines of Judaism by logical evidence. Saadia develops first the sources of the perception of truth, the means by which truth may be found and recognized—sense perception, direct judgment, and logical inference. These sources of perception he finds indicated in the verses of the Pentateuch and of the Prophets. In this way he tries to prove that Judaism is not in conflict with the philosophic consciousness. To the credulous, unthinking masses he endeavors to prove

that the irrational and the superstitious beliefs, such as the transmigration of souls, are not Jewish; the philosophically cultured doubters he seeks to convince that Judaism and reason can live in perfect harmony with each other.

Saadia's work was a timely one. Unbelief had made such strides in the Eastern califate as a result of the philosophic schools of the Motazilites that an Arabic poet, a contemporary of Saadia's who criticized the shortcomings of his generation, could say: "Moslems, Jews, Christians, Magi—all are sunk in error and in folly. There are two kinds of people in the world: those who have intelligence but have no faith; those that have faith but lack intelligence." It was a period of enlightenment that expressed itself, in Jewish circles, in the doubt in the trustworthiness of the Bible and in the fact of the revelation. Chief among these unbelievers was the Rabbinite Hiwi al-Balkhi, of the city of Balkh (in former Bactria). Hiwi wrote a book against the Bible and Revelation, giving two hundred reasons for his position, some of which are of the kind that is still used to-day against the Bible by present-day infidels. In the face of such arguments, Saadia endeavored to found his philosophic system upon the fact of Revelation. His point of departure is that the universe is limited in space and in time, and it follows therefrom that it did not produce itself but necessarily presupposes a creator. It is true that the human mind can conceive a creation out of nothing with difficulty; but inasmuch as a faultless inference compels us to admit it and as its opposite is equally difficult to conceive, one must satisfy himself with it.

Once philosophy recognizes God as the creator, it must also ascribe unity to Him. But with the concept *creator of the universe* three attributes of God are simultaneously included. One cannot con-

ceive of Him otherwise than being (living, real), knowing (omniscient), and powerful. In reality, these three attributes—Being, Wisdom, and Power —constitute only one concept.

When the soul, by virtue of its power of perception, dwells deeply upon the sublimity of God, it will inevitably conceive an inner love and reverence for Him, will be filled with gratitude to Him, will regard itself as His servant, will find as good whatever joy or suffering His lofty will ordains, and will bear it in humility and submissiveness. The innate feeling in the soul of dependence upon God is the source of religion. Man, by virtue of his own nature, might raise himself to a knowledge of God and to virtue, and needs no revelation. But the road of knowledge is distant and laborious. Even if man should finally reach it after overcoming many obstacles and calamities, he would be unable to discover the right standard in accordance with which religion and virtue are to be practiced. The human mind knows well that unchastity, theft and murder are vices which must be avoided; but, of itself, it will be unable to find the line of demarcation between the permitted and the prohibited, that is, the regulative law. This could be accomplished only by Revelation and by God's announcements through his messengers, the prophets.

God endowed the prophets with the gift of miracles, by which they confirm and verify their messages. These divine messengers, however, are absolutely subject to all human frailties and vicissitudes. Had God selected angels or higher beings as His messengers, mankind, unfamiliar with the nature of angels, would have remained in doubt whether the miracles performed by them emanated from God or from these higher beings themselves. The prophets, however, by the very fact of their human limitations, convince mankind that their

messages emanated solely from God. However, miracles alone do not suffice to prove the genuineness of the prophets; the contents of the message must, in themselves, contain the stamp of truth and of the divine. By signs and miracles the people of Israel became still further convinced that the Law of Moses, harmonizing as it does with the natural laws of morality, emanated from God beyond the shadow of a doubt. It is, therefore, the duty of every Israelite to keep that law faithfully. A large portion of the teachings of Judaism is also "rational law"; that is, it also agrees with reason. Some ritual ordinances can likewise be explained on rational grounds.

From the results of philosophy and of revelation Saadia composes a kind of practical ethics which may be regarded as the acme of his system. By cherishing the truth and by observing the laws which Judaism teaches, man may achieve the perfection for which God has destined him. By a life pleasing to God the soul becomes purified; sin, on the other hand, stains the soul. The eye of man, limited in scope, surely cannot see how one act perfects the soul, and another act, though similar, defiles it. However, by virtue of his psychic capacity, man is capable of achieving the highest degree of virtue; and such a man, who had reached the highest degree of virtue, would be a perfectly just man. But there are degrees in virtue as in sin. The moral order of the universe demands that the just be rewarded with eternal bliss, and that sinners be punished. Reward and punishment is, indeed, meted out by divine justice in this world also; but the harmonious compensation is paid only in the other world. Inasmuch as the other world alone can bring about the just compensation for this world's contradictions, it follows that death cannot be regarded as the end but only as a transition.

Death separates the soul from the body only for a time. The purified souls of the just then rise to a place of bliss; the stained souls, on the other hand, wander restlessly in space. Resurrection is to bring further reward for the just and the repentant sinner. In accordance with the Talmudic conception, and with the popular belief, Saadia understood by resurrection a reunion of the soul with the same body from which it had been separated by death.

The resurrection, according to Saadia, was to follow the Messianic redemption. This era of mercy and happiness was to come to pass upon this earth and all the nations were to participate in it in proportion to their attitude to the Jewish people. The highest bliss, however, is reserved for the world to come. There the harmonization of all discord takes place. The just and the pious will be transferred from the earth to an ethereal chamber, and those who died without repentance will be sent to another chamber to suffer the punishments of hell in accordance with the degree of their misconduct. Saadia painted fantastically the abode of the blessed and the last judgment; it is the weakest part of his system.

Defective as was Saadia's system of the philosophy of religion, it proved of great significance to posterity. The very circumstance that a gaon and a Talmudic authority regarded reasoning and philosophic views worthy of his notice, and that he endeavored to present the Scriptures and traditions in the light of reason, struck a blow at blind faith. Several succeeding geonim and representatives of Judaism followed his example, and a rationalistic interpretation of the Scriptures gradually became dominant in the Babylonian schools in Africa and Spain. Later on it became even a matter of fashion. Saadia's influence, extending through many mediums, reaches to this day. Moslem men of learn-

ing also studied his work on "Beliefs and Doctrines," and praised it very highly.

All the time Saadia was engaged in developing his philosophic system, he was under the ban, and his influence was only a literary one. But circumstances soon changed. The greedy calif Kahir who removed Saadia from office was succeeded by the just Alradhi and the Vizier Ali ibn Isa, who was favorably disposed toward Saadia, again rose to power. The gaon Kohen-Zedek, who had made common cause with the exilarch, had died (936), and his successor was a harmless man. Saadia gained an ever greater following in the communities. The exilarch, David, however, still persisted in his animosity to Saadia to such an extent that he struck one of the parties to an important suit who selected Saadia as his referee in the case. This act of violence led the influential men of the communities to realize the absolute necessity of putting a stop to the differences between the exilarch and the gaon, and finally, through the intervention of Kasser, an influential man of Bagdad and father-in-law of Ibn-Sargadu, they succeeded in effecting a reconciliation between David and Saadia. The reconciliation was so sincere that the exilarch entertained Saadia as his guest for several days, and then reinstated him into office with many marks of honor. The opposition gaon was removed, but continued to receive his pay.

The academy of Sura regained its lustre under Saadia, and obscured its sister academy, where two not particularly known geonim officiated in succession. Inquiries from internal and foreign communities were again directed to Sura, and Saadia replied untiringly. His responses were numerous, and many of these, partly in Hebrew but mostly in Arabic, are still extant. Saadia's magnanimity is seen in his attitude to the family of his opponent

David. Upon David's death (940), Saadia voted for the election of his son Judah, who, however, survived his election only seven months, leaving a twelve-year-old son. Saadia took this grandson of his former enemy to his house, educated him and determined to raise him to the exilarchate upon his coming of age. Meanwhile the exilarchate was to be filled by a collateral relative, a member of the Bene-Haiman, who lived in Nisibis. But he was no sooner elected than he fell into a quarrel with a Moslem; witnesses testified that he had blasphemed Mohammed, and he was slain in consequence. When the last descendant of the exilarch's house, reared by Saadia, reached his majority, and was raised to the exilarchate, the fanaticism of the Moslems broke loose against him too. The nobles and the rabble, begrudging the Jews the shadow of princely power, determined to murder him while riding in his carriage of state. The calif sought in vain to prevent this assassination. The last exilarch was murdered; and the representatives of Judaism, out of fear of Moslem fanaticism, decided to discontinue the dignity of the exilarchate. Thus died the exilarchate that existed for more than seven centuries, and that represented a sort of Jewish political independence. As the patriachate in Judaea came to an end through the intolerance of Christian emperors, so the exilarchate came to an end through that of the Mohammedans. The unity of Jewry was now represented only by the two academies; but these also hastened to their fall.

With Saadia's death (942), the glory of the Sura academy vanished. Saadia left a son, Dosa, who was a Talmudist and a philosopher and an author of several treatises; but the appointment to his father's succession did not go to him but to Joseph ben Satia, Saadia's former rival. This gaon, however, could not maintain the reputation of Sura

against her sister academy that rose into prominence again through the election to the gaonate of Aaron ibn Sargadu, Saadia's former opponent. Ibn Sargadu did not serve in the various academic capacities, was not a member of the college, but a rich merchant of Bagdad. He was, however, preferred because of his wealth, his knowledge, and his energy, and officiated nearly eighteen years (943-960). He possessed a thorough philosophic education and wrote a treatise on philosophy and a commentary on the Pentateuch. Like Kohen-Zedek, Ibn Sargadu endeavored to elevate the academy of Pumbedita at the expense of Sura. As a result, the latter academy became isolated and impoverished, received no contributions, and could therefore attract no new students who preferred to join the wealthy Pumbedita. In a few years, its president, Joseph ben Satia, was compelled to close the doors of the Sura academy, and he wandered to Bassora (about 948). Thus died the academy founded by Rab that continued its activities for upward of seven centuries. The Jews of Sura, it seems, could not reconcile themselves to the loss of the venerable academy, and sent four young men abroad to arouse the sympathy of the wealthy communities and to wage upon them the continuance of their contributions. But fate was against the resurrection of the Sura academy. The four young men fell into the hands of a Moorish-Spanish admiral on the coast of Italy, and were carried away, one into Alexandria, one into Kairwan, one into Cordova, and one probably into Narbonne (about 948). Instead of saving the academy of Sura, these scholarly young men unwittingly contributed to the fall of the gaonate. The copies of the Talmud that remained in Sura with none to read them were later transferred to Spain. Babylonia, so long the center of Jewry, was to yield its leadership to the West.

The fall of one Babylonian academy, with the exhaustion of Talmudic study consequent upon it, encouraged the Karaites to enter upon a proselytizing campaign among the Rabbinites. As long as the mighty champion Saadia was living they dared not enter within the province of his activity; but after his death, with no man of importance standing in the breach, they thought the time opportune to make short shrift of Talmudic Judaism. The aged Solomon ben Jeruham, Saadia's violent opponent, hastened from Palestine to Babylonia, to convince Saadia's admirers that Saadia, in his defense of the Talmudists, had misrepresented facts (before 957). A still more active and zealous proselytizer was the young Karaite Abu al-Sari Sahal ben Mazliah-Kohen, who was a member of the penitent Karaite community of Jerusalem. Sahal was a master of Arabic and Hebrew, and surpassed all his contemporaries in the elegance of his Hebrew style. He wrote a Hebrew grammar, commentaries to some books of the Scriptures, and also a refutation of Saadia's attacks upon Karaism. It was, in a sense, a matter of honor among the Karaites to win their spurs in combat with that great champion. Another prolific Karaite writer of Bassora, Yafit ibn Ali Halevi (950-90), entered into polemics with Jacob ben Samuel, Saadia's gifted disciple. Though the Karaites style him a grammarian, Bible commentator, teacher of the Law, and though he was an acknowledged authority among them and included by them among the "Great Teachers," Yafit was, after all, only a writer of mediocrity. He shared in the failing of his coreligionists, who indulged in bombast and verbosity, and, like them, he was superficial. The lack of Talmudic dialectics avenged itself on the Karaitic writers and turned them into tedious tattlers.

THE JEWISH-SPANISH PERIOD

CHAPTER I

THE AGE OF IBN SHAPRUT
(950-1020)

With the fall of the exilarchate and of the academy of Sura, Asia lost its leadership of the world's Jewry. If the academy of Pumbedita, under Aaron Ibn Sargadu, flattered itself as possessing the sole authority, it was laboring under a self-delusion. The internal dissensions that followed Ibn Sargadu's death contributed to its dissolution. Kohen-Zedek's son Nehemiah succeeded in obtaining the gaonate (960), but the college opposed him and was in favor of Sherira, a descendant of the ancient nobility. Nehemiah was supported only by a few wealthy laymen, while the college refused to recognize his authority throughout the eight years that he presided over Pumbedita (960-68). And while the two parties were quarrelling over the gaonate of Pumbedita, and thus also over the religious authority of Jewry at large, the four young men of Sura who had been captured by the Mohammedan admiral Ibn Rumahis established new Talmudic schools, and thereby set the communities of those countries free from their dependence upon the gaonate. These four young men who were destined to

transplant the vineyard of the Talmud upon new soil were: Shemariah ben Elhanan, who was sold by the admiral in Alexandria, redeemed by the Jewish community of that city, and finally settled at Cairo; Hushiel, who was sold on the African coast and found a home in Kairwan; the third, probably Nathan ben Isaac Cohen, a Babylonian, who possibly made his home in Narbonne; Moses ben Enoch, who experienced greater perils than his comrades.

Moses ben Enoch was the only married man among the four, and was accompanied on his journey by his beautiful and pious wife and his very young son. The admiral Ibn Rumahis cast lustful eyes upon the youthful, pretty woman, and intended to seize her. Thereupon she asked her husband in Hebrew whether those who perish in the sea may expect resurrection, and upon his reply in the affirmative she jumped into the sea and was drowned. In deepest dejection Moses and his little son were dragged to Cordova and were redeemed by the Jewish community, unsuspecting that in him they acquired for Spain the supremacy of Jewry. Moses did not betray his Talmudic knowledge, in order to derive no profit from his learning. Poorly clad, he entered the school of Cordova, presided over by a rabbi-judge named Nathan whose Talmudic knowledge was very meager but who was regarded in Spain as a great light. Moses took a seat in a corner near the door as an ignorant listener, but when he discovered that Nathan proceeded to interpret the Talmudic passage like a school boy, he ventured modestly to raise a few objections that betrayed the master. The audience in the school-house was astonished to find a great Talmudic scholar in the recently redeemed captive, clad like a beggar. He was urged to elucidate the passage in question, and to solve other problems;

and he did so with such skill that he excited the greatest admiration of his listeners. With extraordinary unselfishness, Nathan resigned his office that very day in favor of Moses, and the rich community of Cordova elected Moses at once as its chief rabbi, presented him with rich gifts, fixed his salary, and placed a carriage of honor at his disposal. When the admiral Ibn Rumahis learned that his captive was so valuable to the community of Cordova, he wanted to annul his bargain with them in order to obtain a higher ransom. The Jews appealed to the just calif Abd al-Rahman III, through the mediation of a Jewish state official, and demonstrated to him that through R. Moses they would become free from their dependence upon the academy of the Oriental califate. This suggestion pleased Abd al-Rahman, who was loath to see considerable sums of money sent every year from his country to the gaonate, located in a califate hostile to him, and he ordered his admiral to recede from his demand. Cordova thus became the seat of an important, independent academy.

Like Moses ben Enoch, his former fellow captives established academies in the new countries whither fate had led them—in Cairo (Egypt) and in Kairwan (Africa). But under the then political and cultural conditions no country was so peculiarly adapted to become the center of Jewry and to take over the leadership from Babylonia as was Spain, or Mohammedan (Moorish) Andalusia. While Christian Europe succumbed again to the absolute barbarism from which the early Carolingians sought to rescue it, and while the Oriental calif presented the picture of approaching senility, the Spanish califate under the Omiads reached such a degree of virility and mental vigor and such a height of culture that one almost forgets that he is dealing with the Middle Ages. Under Abd al-

Rahman III, surnamed Al-Nazir, who was the first to assume the full title of a Calif "Prince of the Faithful" (Emir al-Mumenim), Spain became the exclusive seat of art and of science, despised or, at best, ignored throughout the world. With him begins the classic period of Moslem civilization, coupled with prosperity and with energy, which was due to the fact that its leaders were noble princes who were devoid of all prejudice against adherents of another religion. Poets, in particular, masters of melodious songs and of winged word, enjoyed great favor in Spain. A successful poem gained for its author almost greater fame than a victory won on a field of battle, and the victory, again, became the subject of song. Every nobleman from the calif down to the lowest provincial emir was proud to count scholars and poets among his friends, and to raise them above the cares of material necessities. Poets and scholars were elevated to high offices.

With their innate susceptibilities, the Jews of Spain could not possibly remain indifferent to this cultural atmosphere; they were seized with a zeal for science and the art of poesy, and Jewish Spain also became "the refuge of culture and of mental activity, a fragrant garden of cheerful, joyous poetry, as well as the seat of serious investigation and clear reasoning." Like the Muzarabs (the Christians who lived among the Mohammedans), the Jews of Spain mastered the language and the literature of the dominant nation, and not rarely even surpassed the Arabs. But while the Muzarabs forgot their native tongue (Gothic Latin), did no longer understand their religious literature, and were ashamed of their Christianity, the Jews of Spain, with the growth of their culture, evinced an even greater love and enthusiasm for their ancient mother tongue, their sacred Scriptures, and

their ancestral religion. By a coincidence of favorable circumstances Jewish Spain was enabled first to rival Babylonia, then to wrest her sceptre from her, and finally to gain and to maintain the leadership of Jewry for nearly five centuries. In the words of the Hebrew poet (Harizi):

"When the chorus of singers ceased to sing,
The lyre of Spain began to ring;
When hushed was the Orient's melody,
The West began to prophesy."

Three men were the founders of the Jewish-Spanish culture: the Talmudist Moses ben Enoch, the first Andalusian grammarian Menahem ben Saruk, and the creator of the form of Hebrew poetry, Dunash ibn Labrat. But these blossoms of culture could unfold themselves only through a man who, by virtue of his great gifts, magnanimity and eminence was, in a sense, the sun that enabled the buds to open. This man was Abu Yusuf Hasdai ben Isaac ibn Shaprut (born about 915; died about 970), of the noble family of Ibn Ezra. He it was who lent support and stability to the intellectual endeavor of the Jews of Spain, and was the first of a line of high-minded, eminent personalities who made the protection and the promotion of Judaism their life's mission. Ibn Shaprut was a thoroughly modern figure whose character and attitude deviated completely from the type of historic leaders who preceded him. His easy, pliable, pleasant nature betrays neither the heaviness of the Oriental nor the gloomy seriousness of the Jew; his acts and his utterances stamp him rather as European. If one may say so, Jewish history, from his time on, bears a European impress.

The love of learning and the wise application of wealth Hasdai acquired from his father Isaac who

was well-to-do and a Maecenas on a small scale. Hasdai applied himself to medicine, the mastery of languages, and, above all, to the arts of diplomacy. He mastered not only the Hebrew and the Arabic but even the Latin which, in Christian Spain, was at best understood only by the higher clergy. Hasdai's abilities attracted the attention of the calif Abd al-Rahman III, who was in frequent diplomatic touch with the small Christian courts of Northern Spain, and the calif appointed him his interpreter and diplomatic agent (about 941). At first, Hasdai used to accompany the ambassadors to the Christian courts merely as an interpreter; gradually, however, the calif entrusted him with more important missions. A diplomatic victory he once achieved by bringing or decoying to Cordova a king of Leon (Sancho Ramirez) and a queen of Navavrre (Toda), together with clergy and nobles, to sign a treaty of peace which proved of great advantage to the califate, called forth the calif's admiration, and he rewarded Hasdai by placing him in a position where he could render the state still greater services. Hasdai became, in a certain sense, the minister of foreign affairs. It was his function to receive ambassadors of foreign princes, their gifts and diplomatic communications, and to present to them the calif's gifts in turn. At the same time, he was also the minister of commerce and of finance, since the treasury receipts in produce and duties passed through his hands. Nevertheless, Hasdai bore no definite official title; he was neither vizier (Hagib, among the Spanish Arabs), nor secretary of state (Katib), for the Arabs also were at first prejudiced against the Jews. The culture that was then beginning to flourish in Mohammedan Spain was as yet unable to overcome the anti-Jewish expressions contained in the Koran; and even the just and noble prince

himself dared not as yet ignore the prevailing prejudices. Hasdai, however, endeavored to arouse a feeling of sympathy for his coreligionists among the Andalusian Moslems, and his influential position enabled him to protect the former against violence. Justly sang a Hebrew poet (Menahem ben Saruk) in his honor:

"From off his people he took the oppressive yoke;
His heart and soul to them was consecrate,
The hateful rod that smote them off he broke."

Nor was this praise exaggerated. Hasdai was, indeed, the comforter and liberator of his brethren far and near. His influence and his wealth were at the service of his coreligionists. Over the Jewish community of Cordova he exercised a sort of judicial and political supremacy, either conferred upon him by the calif or voluntarily acquiesced in by the community. The Babylonian academy which he patronized liberally bestowed upon him the meaningless but pompous title of "Chief of the Academy." Of the envoys of foreign rulers who sought favor or the protection of the calif, and who presented him also with gifts in order to obtain his intercession, Hasdai used to inquire after the condition of the Jews in those countries, and induced them to advocate the cause of his coreligionists.

Hasdai played an important part in two embassies of the mightiest courts of Europe of that day. The Byzantine empire, harassed on all sides, was ever in need of foreign help, and the feeble and pedantic Emperor Constantine VIII, the son and brother of the emperors who had inflicted so much suffering on the Jews, sought to form an alliance with the mighty Moslem rulers of Spain against the califate of the East. He therefore sent a solemn embassy to Cordova (about 944-49), laden

with rich gifts, amongst which was a fine copy of Dioscorides' Greek treatise on simple medical remedies which the calif and his medical college desired to possess. But as this book on which the Arabic physicians placed such a high value was written in Greek which they did not understand, Constantine sent along as an interpreter the monk Nicholas, who understood Latin in addition to Greek. As Hasdai was the only one among the physicians of Cordova who understood Latin, the calif ordered him to collaborate in the translation, so that Nicholas translated the Greek original into Latin and Hasdai the Latin into Arabic. The calif Abd al-Rahman rejoiced in the accomplishment of a work which, to his manner of thinking, added great luster to his mighty reign.

In the embassy which the mighty German Emperor Otto I sent to the court of Cordova, Hasdai played a singular part. Abd al-Rahman had formerly sent an embassy to Otto and employed insulting references to Christianity in his message. For this reason the Andalusian envoys were made to wait several years before they were given an imperial audience. After they had been received, the German emperor dispatched a counter-embassy, in charge of the Abbot Johannes of Göritz (Jean de Vendieres) and sent along a missive that was replete with harsh expressions against Islam. The calif, who suspected that much, ordered Hasdai to learn the contents of the diplomatic document. Hasdai negotiated with Johannes of Göritz several days, and obtained the desired information. Abd al-Rahman, thereupon, kept the German embassy waiting for an audience an entire year, and would have kept them waiting longer had not Hasdai induced Johannes of Göritz to obtain from the emperor another, non-insulting missive (956-959).

Hasdai, who was a man of large vision, was

deeply grieved at heart when he considered the condition of Jewry, their state of dispersion and dependence. He often heard Christians and Mohammedans advance the argument against the truth of Judaism: "Since the sceptre departed from Judah, it is proof that God had rejected the Jewish Law." Hasdai himself shared in the narrow view held in his days, that a people and a religion that have no territorial possession and political power are doomed. For this reason, he was deeply interested in the vague rumor that had reached Spain of the existence of an independent Jewish kingdom in the land of the Chazars. An adventurer who called himself Eldad, claiming descent from the tribe of Dan that was supposedly still in existence in some corner of the earth, spread wonderful tales in the course of his travels through Egypt, Kairwan, Western Africa, and Spain, and thereby lent some authenticity to the rumors concerning the Chazars. On the other hand, his exaggerated reports that the Ten Tribes of Israel were still in existence as an independent power, cast a suspicion upon all his statements. Hasdai therefore never omitted an opportunity to inquire from the envoys of far-away countries as to the existence of a Jewish kingdom, and great was his joy when he learned from the envoy of Khorassan (east of the Caspian Sea) that the land of the Chazars really had a Jewish king. This was corroborated by the Byzantine ambassadors, who added that the then reigning Chaghan bore the Jewish name of Joseph, the Chazars were a powerful nation whose domain is fifteen days distant from Constantinople, and that they were in political and commercial touch with the Byzantine empire.

Hasdai was consumed with a desire to set himself in communication with the king of the Chazars, and was looking about for a reliable messenger who

was to deliver his message to the king of the Chazars and at the same time bring back some definite information about him and his country. After much effort, Hasdai finally accomplished his purpose. An embassy from the Slavonian King Hunu (or Duku) on the Lower Danube arrived at Cordova. This embassy contained two Jewish envoys who knew something about the Chazars and who promised to forward Hasdai's letter to its destination through the Jews of Hungary, Russia and Bulgaria. The close union existing among the Jews enabled them to enter into correspondence with places which the most powerful states could not reach at that time and even later. Hasdai hastened to deliver to the Slavonian envoy his missive to the king of the Chazars. This letter, written in fine Hebrew prose, introduced by an acrostic of his name by Menaham ben Saruk, is an invaluable document for the study of contemporaneous history as well as of Hasdai's character; it betrays a sense of piety and diplomacy, a humility, a consciousness of his own worth, and even a certain self-complacent vanity. Hasdai states that he considers himself unworthy to address the king, and is at a loss how to begin; he describes the great pains he had taken in gaining information about the Chazar kingdom and in finding a reliable messenger, and that he was actuated by no mere idle curiosity and self-seeking, but by a desire to learn whether Israel, in one spot on the face of the earth, is free from masters. "If I knew that such was the case, I would give up my honors, resign my position, forsake my family, and would wander over land and sea until I could throw myself at the feet of my king, of the tribes of Israel, and rejoice in his greatness and power." The letter then asks for detailed information, particularly as to which of the Ten Tribes the Chazars trace their origin, as to the po-

litical and military situation of the country, especially as to whether they observe the Sabbath in the course of a military campaign, and whether they are familiar with the Hebrew language.

In a circuitous way Hasdai's letter reached the hands of the Chaghan Joseph, the eleventh Jewish prince since Obadiah. The land of the Chazars was then (about 960) a considerable power still, though it had lost several vassal states. It still embraced all the countries north of the Caspian to the Yaik and the Don northwards to the Caucasus, to the eastern shore of the Black Sea and to the Dnieper. The capital of the Chaghan Joseph was located on an island in the Volga, and contained a golden tent-like palace with a golden gate. The Chazars had to be on the alert against the Russians, who grew in strength since the arrival of the Varangians, and who cast envious eyes upon the country of the Chazars. For this reason they were compelled to maintain a standing army. But the senile Byzantine empire still had to respect the Chazars as a great power, and to address the Jewish princes as "noble and exalted Chaghans."

The Chaghans took a deep interest in their foreign coreligionists, and Hasdai's letter gave Joseph as much joy as Hasdai felt when he learned with certainty of the existence of a Jewish kingdom. Joseph, therefore, wrote, or had a Jewish scholar write for him, a reply in Hebrew, in order to satisfy Hasdai's sympathetic curiosity, and, at the same time, to enter into communication with his coreligionists of the West. The Chaghan expresses his joy at the receipt of Hasdai's letter, but disabused Hasdai's mind of the error that the Chazars were of Israelitish descent. The Chazars were rather of pagan origin. The Chaghan then tells the details of the conversion to Judaism of his an-

cestor Bulan, and names each of his successors, all of whom bore Hebrew names.

When Joseph was preparing his reply, he could still boast of his peaceful relations. The state of affairs, however, soon changed. One of Rurik's descendants, the Russian Grand Duke Sviatoslav, formerly a semi-vassal of the Chazars, declared war against the Chazars and captured the border fortress of Sarkel (965). The Russians, whose power was growing, pressed the Chazars ever harder and harder, and the latter finally fled to an island in the Caspian sea, and partly to the Crimea, where their kinsmen lived and to which they gave their name, land of the Chazars. The kingdom of the Chazars shrank into insignificance. Joseph was the last powerful prince of the Chazars.

When Hasdai received Joseph's letter, his patron Abd al-Rahman was no longer living; but his son Al-Hakim, who was even a more zealous friend of science and of poetry, held Hasdai in high honor, gave him a very high rank in the state, and derived even greater benefits than his father from Hasdai's wisdom and experience.

Spurred on by the example of the two noble califs, Hasdai also became a generous patron of talent, in Jewish circles; and the glory of the development of Andalusian Jewish culture is due to him. By his generosity he attracted to Cordova Jewish scholars and poets who, in turn, rewarded him by perpetuating his name in song and in the literary works they dedicated to him.

Among the scholars and poets of this period, Menahem ben Saruk and Dunash ben Labrat stand preëminent. Both made searching studies in the Hebrew language, enriched and improved it manifold, and surpassed by far the achievements of their predecessors, the Karaite grammarians, and even Saadia himself. Dunash elicited a melody

from the sacred tongue, and gave it a symmetrical form of which no one thought is susceptible. He was the first to introduce the metre into Hebrew poetry. Strange to say, Saadia censured him for these innovations as doing violence to the Hebrew language. The tenor of the neo-Hebraic poetry was also changed and enriched by the Jewish-Andalusian poets. Poetry bore hitherto only a synagogal character; it was always contrite and penitent; laughter was a stranger to it. Even when it climbed the height of the Hymn, it didn't lay aside its sombre seriousness. When it tried its hand at didactics and polemics it degenerated into mere riming. Ibn Shaprut gave the poets an opportunity to change their theme. His imposing personality, his eminence, his deeds and his princely generosity inspired the poets; and while they were singing his praises and glorifying him, they rejuvenated the Hebrew language that was apparently dead, and rendered it euphonious and susceptible of growth. The Jewish-Andalusian poets consciously took Arabic poetry as their model; they acknowledged that "Arab became the teacher of Eber." But Dunash and the others who adopted his metric forms did not follow the Arabic models slavishly; they took pains to adapt the metre to the peculiar genius of the Hebrew language. From the very beginning of this florescent period verse assumed a quick, lively, dancing pace. The favorite theme of the neo-Hebraic poetry was the laudatory poem and satire.

Dunash ben Labrat, who came to Fez from Bagdad, was an impassioned, reckless personality who never weighed his words, well adapted to literary polemics. His knowledge of the Hebrew was profound; at thirty he was already the acknowledged master of a circle of disciples. He seems to have been a man of means. His older contemporary

Menahem ben Saruk of Tortosa (born about 910, died about 970), on the other hand, spent his youth in poverty, until Hasdai's father Isaac became his patron. In appreciation of Isaac's generosity, Menahem placed a poetic memorial in the synagog which Isaac had built. The study of the Hebrew language was Menahem's favorite occupation, and while he utilized the labors of his predecessors, the nobility of his Hebrew style he owed to no one but to his own innate genius.

When Hasdai reached his eminence, he induced his father's protégé, with flattering words and glowing promises, to come to Cordova, and Menahem became his court poet who, in return for his generosity, "exhausted the arts of poetry to sing his praises." Ibn Shaprut's liberality enabled Menahem to continue his studies of the Hebrew language, and he compiled a complete Hebrew dictionary (about 955) which contained also some rules of grammar, and many corrections of errors on the part of his predecessors. Reared in an environment where much stress was attached to the impressiveness and harmony of the spoken word, the grammarian of Tortosa placed a high value upon language in general, and upon the Hebrew in particular. The aim of his work was to reveal the laws and the elegance of the Hebrew language.

Because Menahem's lexicographical work, "Mahberet," was written in Hebrew, it came into general use even in France and Italy, supplanted the work of Saadia and of the Karaites, and, for a long time, was used as a standard by Bible students. Ben Saruk's satisfaction, however, was marred by the attack made upon him by Dunash ben Labrat. Dunash who, in the arrogance of youth, ventured to criticize Saadia's studies, spared Menahem even less; and composed a critical review of the Mahberet written with great skill but in a tone of irony

and mockery that hurt. Possessing the conceit of the learned caste, Dunash believed that the Orient was the sole seat of wisdom, and regarded Spanish scholars with contempt. His attack on Menahem, therefore, went beyond the boundaries of literary criticism, but degenerated into personalities. This critical exposition he dedicated to Hasdai, and bestowed fulsome praises upon him in the introductory poem with the evident object of gaining the favor of the Jewish Maecenas at the expense of Menahem.

Nor did Dunash's flattery of Hasdai fail to accomplish its purpose. When Hasdai realized that Dunash was a better poet than Menahem, and at least his equal in scholarship, he lost his esteem for his protégé, and when some tale-bearers who wished to ingratiate themselves into the favor of the Jewish statesman calumniated him secretly (the nature of the slander is unknown), Hasdai turned against Menahem and condemned him without a hearing. Ben Saruk would have fared badly had not Hasdai's brother taken pity on him and provided for his necessaries. Menahem sought to convince his former patron of the injustice done to him, but Hasdai remained deaf to his appeals and added insult to injury by replying to him laconically: "If thou be guilty, the suffering I caused thee hath led thee to repentance; if thou be innocent, the undeserved suffering I brought upon thee hath assured thee eternal bliss in the life to come." Hasdai's treatment of Menahem is a stain upon his character. Menahem, however, found avengers in his disciples, Judah Ibn Daud (Hayyuj), Isaac Ibn Gikatilla, and Ben Kafron, who vindicated their master and treated Dunash with equal incivility in well-written Hebrew verse. They, likewise, dedicated their vindications to Hasdai in a satire upon Dunash and in a laudatory poem in honor of the statesman who

seemed, at that time, to have returned from a diplomatic victory which he achieved for the Calif Al-Hakim. The disciples of Menahem and of Dunash hurled witty satires against one another, and these polemics contributed essentially to render the Hebrew language polished, flexible and rich.

Just as Hasdai ibn Shaprut consciously and unconsciously, by his encouragement and rewards, created Hebrew poets and rhetoricians, so was he instrumental also in creating a home for the study of the Talmud in Spain. Jewish science was as yet too young in Europe to be independent; it needed a protector. Moses ben Enoch, who had left Sura to raise funds for that academy and whom a strange fate had brought to Cordova, likewise found a patron in Hasdai; and the two califs who were lovers of learning were glad to see the establishment of an independent Talmudic academy in their kingdom which would tend to render their Jewish subjects independent of Bagdad. R. Moses could not have arrived in Spain at a time that was more favorable for the establishment of a secure seat for the Talmud. Just as the Spanish Arabs endeavored to eclipse the califate of Bagdad, and to gain all political and literary glory for themselves, the Spanish Jews, and particularly those of the capital, set their hearts upon the establishment of a sort of a gaonic academy in their midst. For this reason they showered honors upon R. Moses, surrounded him with splendor, and acknowledged him as an authority. Young men, eager for study, flocked to his academy from Spain and Africa, and a rivalry ensued to acquire a knowledge of the Talmud as well as a deeper insight into the Hebrew language in order to throw off the dependence upon Babylonian teachers. Hasdai bought at his own expense the copies of the Talmud that were lying idle in Sura, and distributed them among R. Moses' dis-

ciples. Cordova became, through R. Moses, the Andalusian Sura. Though he bore only the modest title of judge or rabbi, he exercised all the functions of a gaon. He ordained rabbis for the Jewish communities, and interpreted the law; and his tribunal was the supreme court for all judicial decisions; he had the right to impose excommunication upon the recalcitrants. All these functions were later bestowed upon the European rabbis.

Spain thus became in many respects the center of Jewry. Some apparently accidental circumstances gave them this advantage, and their awakened self-consciousness was bent upon retaining it. The prosperity of the Cordova community enabled it to make the capital the focus of scientific endeavor. Cordova contained thousands of wealthy Jewish families who vied with the Arabs in the love of luxury. They dressed in silks, wore costly turbans, rode in stately carriages, and on horses with waving plumes, and acquired a knightly mien and an air of grandeur that distinguished them favorably from their coreligionists of other countries. It must be admitted, though, that some of them owed their wealth to the slave traffic, inasmuch as they bought slaves from the Slavic countries and sold them to the califs who gradually came to use them as their bodyguard.

After R. Moses' death (about 965) the question of succession threatened to disrupt the community of Cordova. One party supported his son, R. Enoch, who as a child had shared the captivity of his parents, whose learning was confined to the Talmud, but who was the son of the man who was greatly revered. Another party embraced the cause of Joseph ben Isaac Abitur, who was R. Moses' most distinguished disciple, who understood Arabic well, possessed poetic gifts, and was a native. However, before the quarrel took a serious turn, Hasdai

lent the weight of his influence in favor of R. Enoch, and R. Moses' son became the Rabbi of Cordova and the authority of the Jewish-Spanish communities. As long as the Jewish statesman lived, R. Enoch's authority remained unquestioned. This rabbinate and the academies that were established simultaneously in Egypt, Kairwan and Southern France hastened the fall of the gaonate in the Orient.

When an historic institution is doomed to destruction, the exertions of the most energetic personalities can no longer keep it alive; and if such personalities succeed by self-sacrificing devotion to defer its hour of death, its life is, at best, a precarious one. This was the case with the Babylonian gaonate that once was full of life and the center of Jewry. Two men who successively graced the Pumbedita academy with their virtues and learning strove in vain to rejuvenate that academy. They could only defer the death of the gaonate for half a century; they were unable to infuse new life into it. These two men, father and son, the last geonim of importance, were Sherira and Hai, whom later rabbis called "Fathers and Teachers of Israel."

Sherira, son of the gaon Haninah (about 930-1000), a scion of a family that contained several geonim and that traced its descent to the exilarchs who flourished before Bostanai, was a gaon of the old type to whom the Talmud was the all in all and who looked askance at scientific ideas. Though he was sufficiently familiar with the Arabic to be able to correspond in that language with communities of Moslem countries, he cared little for Arabic literature, and employed the Hebrew and the Aramaic by preference. His literary activities were confined altogether to the Talmud. But his moral earnestness more than compensated for his intellectual shortcomings. As a judge, his decisions were based

on absolute truth and impartial justice. As the head of an academy, he labored indefatigably to spread a knowledge of the Talmud. In his responsa he followed the Talmud most scrupulously, and once censured a slave owner for giving his young slave biblical instruction and for permitting him, when he grew up, to have a marriage ceremony performed upon his marriage with a female slave, because such procedure was opposed to the views held by some Talmudic teachers.

Sherira became famous through a letter which has become the chief source of Talmudic, post-Talmudic and gaonic history. Jacob ben Nissim ibn Shahin, a disciple of Hushiel, one of the four young men of Sura who had been captured by the Spanish admiral and who had been sold into Africa where he was ransomed and he established an academy in Kairwan, wrote to R. Sherira for information with reference to the origin and history of the Mishnah and the Talmud. Behind this open question there lurked the doubt as to the antiquity of the traditions contained in the oral or Talmudic law. Were those traditional legal decisions really older than the schools of Hillel and Shammai? If they were really very ancient, why did not the prophets also attest to the fact that they emanated from Sinai or from Moses? To these questions that lurked in the background, Sherira did not and could not reply; but the open question with reference to the succession of Talmudic, post-Talmudic and gaonic authorities received an elaborate treatment at his hands. In this reply, Sherira proves himself a genuine chronicler, with all the dullness, veracity and reliability of one. Jewish history owes to him the continuity of the historic thread from the close of the Talmudic epoch to his own time. Sherira's was by no means a work of art, but it was no worse than if not superior to the products of the contem-

porary historians of the East and the West, among the Arabian Spaniards, the Germanic tribes, and Byzantians, who reduced history to the mere dry skeleton of names and dates. The art of history was not a part of the genius of medievalism.

Despite his untiring labors, Sherira could not prevent the fall of the Pumbedita academy. The zeal for the acquisition of Talmudic and other knowledge died. So poor was the academy in learned men that Sherira was compelled to appoint as chief judge, next in rank to the president himself, his gifted, precocious son Hai, who was only sixteen years old. The high esteem in which the gaon was formerly held also disappeared. Some evil-minded men preferred charges against Sherira with the calif Al-Kadir (about 997), probably because of the severity he displayed in his judicial decisions, and he and his son were imprisoned and robbed of all their possessions and reduced to poverty. Through the intercession of some influential friends they were released and their offices were restored to them. Sherira soon resigned, presumably because of old age, transferred the gaonate to his son Hai (998), and died a few years later. Hai's knowledge was not confined to the Talmud, and, unlike his father, he was an opponent of mysticism. He cultivated the study of Hebrew philology and tried his hand at poetry, though in these fields his achievements were rather mediocre. His knowledge of the Talmud, however, was exceedingly profound, and because of his learning and of his noble character he was loved and esteemed far and wide. But the academy of Pumbedita pined away, none the less, because the newly arisen academies of Northern Africa and Western Europe made that of Pumbedita dispensable, and because its system of instruction had become antiquated. Pumbedita was suffering from senility.

On the other hand, the communities north and south of the Straits of Gibraltar (Andalusia and Maghreb) were awakening to a new life of usefulness and vigor. In the Jewish communities of Andalusia, in particular, there ensued an emulation in the various branches of knowledge, a joy of learning and of teaching, an eagerness to create and to produce. The seed sown by Hasdai's generosity towards scholars, by Moses ben Enoch's efforts in behalf of the Talmud, and the poetic and philologic productions of Ben Saruk and Ibn Labrat yielded beautiful fruit. Versatility was regarded among the Jews as among the Moslems of Andalusia a man's finest adornment, and brought honors and wealth. The rulers followed in the footsteps of Abd al-Rahman, and appointed Jews of ability to political offices. In the Mohammedan and Christian courts of Spain Jews acted as financial agents and ministers. These men followed Hasdai's example in promoting and supporting scholarship and poetry by displaying their liberality and generosity in proportion to their wealth. The educated Jews of Andalusia spoke and wrote Arabic with as much purity and skill as the Arabs themselves; and the latter were always glad to welcome a Jewish poet in their midst. The students who devoted themselves to the Talmud were not indifferent to poetry and to the study of the Bible; and if they were not poets themselves, they appreciated the rhythmic productions of the neo-Hebraic poets. Those who studied philosophy felt a sense of pride if they possessed Talmudic knowledge also; and it often happened that rabbis were at the same time also teachers of philosophy.

However, this education and refinement of the Spanish Jews were not a mere veneer, but tended to elevate and to purify their whole life. They were animated by the high-mindedness that keeps base-

ness and sordidness at a distance. The eminent men who by virtue of their political positions or of other services stood at the head of all Spanish Jewry or of individual communities were, for the most part, men of high moral character, of the noblest impulses and of the tenderest sensibilities. Sharing the qualities of knighthood with the Andalusian Arabs, they surpassed the latter in their sense of honor and in their magnanimity, qualities which they preserved even after the Arabs had sunk into degeneracy. Like their neighbors, they took a self-conscious pride in their personalities that expressed itself in a long series of names. But this pride rested upon moral grounds. They were proud of their ancestors. Certain families, such as Ibn Ezra, Alfakar, Ibn Falyaj, Ibn Ghayyat, Benveniste, Ibn Migas, Abulafia and others, formed an aristocracy; but this advantage of birth they regarded not as a privilege but as an obligation to distinguish themselves by knowledge and generosity in order to be worthy of their ancestors. The educational ideal for which civilized nations but recently began to strive; the combination of knowledge, feeling and strength of character, was reduced to practice among the Spanish Jews in their golden age. Their religious life was transfigured by their higher education. They loved their religion with the ardor of conviction and of enthusiasm. Each Jewish institution, biblical or Talmudic, was sacred to them, but they were free from stupid superstitions and from silly fanaticism. Though some of them pursued their investigations to the very border line of skepticism, hardly one Jewish-Spanish thinker ever passed beyond that line, nor did mysticism run riot find a home among them, at least during the golden age. No wonder that the Spanish Jews were regarded as beings of a higher order by their brethren of the uncultured European countries, of

France, Germany, and Italy. The Jewish communities outside of Spain paid the same deference to them as they formerly did to their coreligionists of Judaea and Babylonia. Cordova, Lucena and Granada took the place of Tiberias, Sura and Pumbedita.

The official representative of Judaism in Andalusia was R. Enoch (b. about 940, d. about 1014), who succeeded his father Moses. Equalling him in Talmudic but surpassing him in other branches of learning was, as already stated, his rival Joseph ben Isaac Abitur. Joseph was a poet and a master of Arabic to such an extent that he was able to translate the Mishnah into Arabic. This he did at the instance of the calif Al-Hakim, who expressed a wish to possess a translation of the source book of Jewish tradition in order to enrich his library that contained more than twenty-four thousand volumes. The representatives of Hebrew philology and poetry were, in the generation succeeding Hasdai, the disciples of Menahem and of Dunash who waged a war of epigrams in prose and verse against one another, among whom Isaac ibn Gikatilla devoted himself to poetry and Judah ibn David to Hebrew grammar. The latter who bore the long Arabic name of Abu Zacariyya Yahya Hayyuj, was the first to place Hebrew philology upon a solid basis, and is acknowledged the first scientific grammarian. Hayyuj introduced a thorough reform in the treatment of the Hebrew language and brought order out of the chaos from which his predecessors, including Saadia, Menahem, Dunash, and particularly the Karaites, could not escape. He was the first to recognize the simplest radicals in the stems of Hebrew words, and though he built on the labors of his predecessors, he was really an inventor of a new system. Hayyuj wrote primarily for his countrymen, and therefore employed the Arabic in his

grammatical treatise. For this reason his work remained unknown to the Jews outside of Spain who, in so far as they occupied themselves with Hebrew philology, followed the imperfect system of Menahem and Dunash.

Although the rabbinical office of Cordova was only an honorary one, and R. Enoch, though not wealthy, received no salary from the community, the question of succession gave rise to dissensions after Hasdai's death. The adherents of Joseph ibn Abitur made strenuous efforts to elevate him to the rabbinate; the majority of the community of Cordova, on the other hand, supported R. Enoch. The dissensions grew so violent that an amicable adjustment became impossible, and both parties appealed to the calif. Upon an impartial investigation, Al-Hakim justly decided in favor of the majority, and confirmed R. Enoch in his office. Ibn Abitur, however, appealed to the calif in person, in the hope that his knowledge of Arabic and the service he had rendered the calif by the translation of the Mishnah into Arabic would induce the latter to revoke his decision. But he was disappointed. The calif replied: "If my Arabs had rejected me as the community of Cordova had done to thee, I would leave my kingdom. I can only advise thee to leave the country." Taking the calif's advice as a command, Ibn Abitur left Spain, sailed for Africa, wandered for some time through Maghreb, the Fatimite califate, and possibly also through Egypt, and visited Babylonia without finding a favorable reception anywhere. Although his academy lost some of its influence and income through the rivalry of Spain, the gaon Hai of Pumbedita refused even to receive Ibn Abitur because the latter was an instigator of dissensions.

Meanwhile, however, Ibn Abitur's affairs took a favorable turn. One of his chief supporters

reached a position of eminence, and used his influence in favor of his protégé. This man was Jacob ibn J'au, a manufacturer of silks, whose sudden, alternate rise and fall illustrates the arbitrariness of the Spanish califate after the death of Al-Hakim (976). This noble prince was succeeded by his son Hisham, a feeble youth; but the real power behind the throne was the regent Mohammed Al-Mansur ibn Abi Amir who was the terror of the Christians in the mountains of Northern Spain and of the Africans in their fortresses. Under this regent, Jacob ibn J'au acquired a certain power over the Jewish communities of Spain. Jacob ibn J'au and his brother Joseph supplied the court with costly silks and banners artistically interwoven with Arabic mottoes and emblems. Their wares were greatly admired and much sought after. In the course of one of their commercial visits to the palace, they found a considerable sum of money lost by some provincials who, for some reason, were refused an audience with Al-Mansur and greatly mistreated. This money they presented to the youthful calif and to Al-Mansur, in order to gain their favor for the recall of the exiled Ibn Abitur. As a result, Al-Mansur appointed Jacob (about 985) the head of all Jewish communities of the Andalusian califate, and invested him with the power of appointing judges and rabbis for the communities, of imposing state taxes upon the communities, and of raising and distributing funds for communal purposes. In addition to that, Al-Mansur invested him with princely splendors. Jacob had eighteen pages in his retinue of honor and rode in a carriage of state. The community of Cordova acknowledged Jacob as its head, paid him homage, and made his office hereditary. The poets sang his praises.

As soon as Jacob ibn J'au was appointed the head of the Jewish communities of the Andalusian

califate, he determined to carry out his scheme of deposing R. Enoch and of recalling Ibn Abitur. He demanded Enoch's resignation, and threatened to place him on a rudderless ship and expose him to the sea—that is, to send him back whence he came. Enoch was deposed. Out of fear or respect of Jacob, all the leaders of the community, even his former opponents, addressed a flattering missive to Ibn Abitur, inviting him to return. But while the community and especially his friends were making preparations to give him an honorable reception, a letter arrived from Ibn Abitur that proved a surprise and a disappointment to them. Instead of rejoicing at the honor they intended to confer upon him, he censured the community for their disrespectful treatment of his opponent, bestowed generous praise upon him, and advised the community to reinstate R. Enoch in his office. Meanwhile, the wheel of fortune turned against Jacob ibn J'au. Al-Mansur, disappointed in Jacob, whom he expected to use his power for the purpose of extorting money from the communities for Al-Mansur's enrichment, not only deprived Jacob of his office, but even imprisoned him. After a year's incarceration, the calif Hisham released him and restored him to his former position of influence. Jacob Ibn J'au remained the head of the Jewish communities for several years (till about 990), and R. Enoch was reinstated.* When Jacob died, one of Enoch's kinsmen hastened to bring the news to the rabbi, expecting to see him rejoice in his enemy's death. The noble rabbi, however, sobbed bitterly, and lamented: "Who will now provide for the poor whom Jacob helped so abundantly? I cannot take his place, seeing I am poor." Ibn Abitur died in Damascus. R. Enoch survived him for several years,

* See note 2, Rabinowitz's Hebrew translation, Vol. III, p. 370.

and was accidentally killed in the synagog on the day of the Rejoicing at the Law (Simchath Torah) when the pulpit collapsed under him (1015).

What Cordova was to Spanish Jewry, Narbonne was to their French coreligionists. Here also a famous academy was in existence, founded probably by one of the four young men of Sura whom fate had scattered to different points. This academy also attracted students, but the prevailing conditions precluded Narbonne from becoming the unifying center of a wide circle. First of all, the French Jews, like the Christians of France, were deficient in higher education. The successors of Louis the Pious did not inherit his Jewish proclivities. Moreover, the real rulers of France were the clergy and the barons. The kings, their power restricted on all sides, could not protect the Jews against the arbitrariness of the petty rulers, even if they were so inclined and were not encouraged by the clergy to hate the Jews. Little by little, the clergy poisoned the minds of the masses also against the Jews, and the besotted populace, slaves of superstition, regarded the sons of Israel as a race accursed, undeserving of pity. They were reputed to indulge in all sorts of witchcraft which they exercised to the disadvantage of Christians. When King Hugo Capet, who employed a Jewish physician, died from an incurable disease (946), the people jumped to the conclusion that he was murdered by Jews, and the monkish chroniclers state this baseless rumor as a fact in their annals. The French Jews did, indeed, own fields and vineyards, but were denied that security of life and property which can be guaranteed only by a strong centralized government, and by a reign of law and order. The bishop of Limoges had Christianity preached to the Jews of that city for a month; and when the Jews, with the exception of three or four, persisted in

their refusal to accept Jesus as the Messiah, they were expelled from the city with their wives and children. Some of them, driven to despair, committed suicide. In Southern France, in Provence and in Languedoc, where the kings had no power at all, the fate of the Jews depended altogether upon the caprice of the nobles. In one place they were permitted to own landed estates and salt pits, and to hold office in the provincial government; in other places they had to submit to be treated as serfs.

In Germany, the Jews were neither oppressed nor favored by the Saxon emperors of that day. The feudal system that developed most extensively in Germany prevented the Jews from owning land, and they were compelled to find recourse in commerce. Jew became synonymous with merchant in Germany. The rich engaged in large commercial enterprises, and the less wealthy loaned the farmers money, with which to visit the Cologne fair, for which they received a small interest. The German emperors received from the early Carolingians the royal prerogative of imposing a special tax upon the Jews. When Otto the Great wished to endow the newly built church of Magdeburg, he bestowed upon it the receipts from Jews and other merchants (965). Otto II, likewise, made a gift of "the Jews of Merseburg," in the legal phrase of that day, to the bishop of that city. On the whole, the Jews were more moral, sober, and industrious than the Christian population, but in culture they were no higher. They did not even have Talmudic teachers of their own, but had to import them from foreign countries. Their first Talmudic authority was Rabbi Gershom (about 960-1028), who, with his brother R. Machir, transplanted the Talmud from Narbonne to the Rhine, and gave it a prominence unknown even in the gaonic schools.

R. Gershom ben Judah, a native of France, was held in such veneration that he received the appellation of "Light of the Exile," but he modestly acknowledged that he owed his learning to his teacher, Rabbi Leontine (Judah b. Meir) of Narbonne. He explained the Talmud to his disciples with greater lucidity and comprehensiveness than his predecessors, and he employed the same method in his commentaries upon the Talmud. He was quickly recognized as a rabbinical authority by the German, French and Italian communities. Many legal inquiries were directed to him and unconsciously he contributed to the fall of the gaonate, though he humbly submitted to the authority of the last gaon, R. Hai. R. Gershom's Hebrew commentaries on the Talmud rendered the gaonic academy altogether superfluous, and detached the French and the German communities also from its influence. Any student was now in a position by means of R. Gershom's commentaries to study the Talmud independently, without the necessity of receiving directions from Babylonia. R. Gershom confined his studies to the Talmud, though he occupied himself also with the barren Masora which, hitherto known only in the Mohammedan countries, he introduced into France and Germany.

R. Gershom became especially famous through his "Decrees" which exerted a great civilizing influence upon the Jews of Germany and of France. He prohibited polygamy, which was in vogue among European Jews too, permitting it only in extreme emergencies, and decreed further that in cases of divorce the wife's consent also was necessary, while, under the Talmudic law, the husband had the right to divorce his wife against her will. He also prohibited the reading of a letter on the part of the one who delivered it. This decree was of especial importance under the conditions then

prevailing when travelers were the only mail-carriers. Violators of these decrees were declared under the ban. And so great was the esteem in which R. Gershom was held that, though these and other decrees were issued without the formality of a synod, and though their author was clothed with no official power, they were nevertheless obeyed by all the German and French communities with all the scrupulousness given to the decisions of a Sanhedrin.

Simultaneously with this authority of the German-French communities, there lived in Mayence another distinguished man, R. Simon ben Isaac ben Abun, a descendant of a French family, who was a Talmudic scholar, rich, extremely philanthropic, and had the opportunity of being of great service to his coreligionists of Germany. The beginning of the eleventh century witnessed the first persecution of Jews in Germany. This emanated not from the people, but from Henry II, the last emperor of the Saxon house of Otto, who stood under the complete sway of the clergy. The specific cause of his enmity to the Jews is not known. It is possible that the conversion to Judaism of a Catholic priest, which the German chronicles regarded of sufficient importance to record in their annals as an untoward incident, aroused the anger of the emperor. This priest, Wecelinus by name, was a chaplain to one of the emperor's relatives; and after his conversion to Judaism (1005) he wrote a libelous attack upon Catholicism, couched in the rude language characteristic of the times, in which he called the Christians fools and beasts and the saints demons. The emperor Henry, indignant at the apostasy and at the venomous attack of the chaplain, ordered one of his court priests, Henry, to write a refutation which was no less rude and abusive. A few years later (1012) the emperor Henry ordered the expulsion

of the Jews from Mayence. In their despair, some Jews embraced Christianity, among them Rabbi Gershom's own son. This broke R. Gershom's heart, but he retained his love for his son, and when he died a Christian his father mourned for him as though he had not forsaken the faith of his fathers. Both Simon ben Abun and R. Gershom commemorated this persecution in penitential piyyutim. However, Ben Abun's exertions and wealth finally succeeded in putting a stop to the persecutions, and the Jewish community was permitted to return to Mayence. Those who had been baptized under compulsion were allowed to return to Judaism, and R. Gershom protected them from insult by pronouncing a ban upon anyone who would reproach them for their momentary disloyalty to their faith. The grateful community perpetuated the memory of its two leaders in the memorial prayer recited every Sabbath in the synagog in honor of "R. Simon the Great who labored in behalf of the communities and who frustrated the evil decrees, and of Rabbi Gershom who imparted light to the eyes of the exile by his ordinances." The academy of Mayence, founded by R. Gershom, became the seat of Talmudic instruction for students and rabbis who flocked to it from Germany, France and Italy.

A violent persecution of Jews broke out at the same time in the Orient and in Egypt, and raged longer than in Germany. The German Jews were persecuted because they did not believe in Christ and in the saints; the Oriental Jews because they did not believe in Mohammed and in the holy Imam, the divine leader (Mahdi). This persecution emanated from the crazy Egyptian calif Hakim, a Mohammedan Caligula, who believed that he was the incarnation of the divinity and God's vice-regent on earth. Hakim persecuted every one who refused to believe in his divinity—Mohammedans, Jews, and

Christians, without distinction. At first Hakim issued an order compelling all Jews of his califate who refused to embrace the Shiitic Islam—that is, that sect of Islam that believed in the Koran only to the exclusion of tradition—to wear on their necks an image of a calf, commemorative of the golden calf of the wilderness. In addition, they were to wear distinctive garments, in accordance with the anti-Jewish laws of Omar, that their very appearance might betray them as non-believers. Transgressors of these laws were to be punished by the confiscation of their property and by exile (1008). Similar edicts were issued against the Christians. When Hakim was informed that the Jews evaded his decree by wearing calf images made of gold, as an ornament, he ordered them to wear on their necks a wooden block weighing six pounds, and bells on their garments, that they might announce themselves as infidels from a distance (about 1010). Later on, he ordered the destruction of the churches and of the synagogs in his kingdom, and expelled the Jews and the Christians from the country (1014). As the kingdom of the Fatimites was then very extensive, comprising Egypt, Northern Africa, Palestine and Syria, and as Hakim had many followers in the califate of Bagdad also, but few places of refuge were left open to the Jews. For this reason, many Jews pretended to embrace Mohammedanism, in the hope of better days to come. The persecutions continued until the Mohammedans themselves became disgusted with the crazy calif and strangled him (1020).

CHAPTER II

THE TIME OF IBN NAGDELA, ALFASI, AND RASHI (1020-1096)

The Arabic culture transplanted from the East to the extreme West, the Pyrenean Peninsula, had already passed its meridian. With the fall of the Omiad califate of Cordova, and with its dismemberment into petty kingdoms (emirates), Arabic civilization began to decline. The Jewish culture, on the other hand, likewise transplanted here from the Orient, began just then to enter upon an ever-increasing period of glory. While Karaism, following its logical development, succumbed to petrifaction, rabbinic Judaism, based upon the Talmud, grew into ever greater self-consciousness and maturity.

Jewish Andalusia concentrated in itself every phase of the religious and intellectual life, and became the sole center of Judaism after the gaonate disappeared. In this half century there appeared an illustrious line of great personalities such as Samuel and Joseph Ibn Nagdela, Ibn Gabirol, and Ibn Janah, whose fame extended beyond Jewish circles, and a considerable number of men of second rank whose services were not insignificant. The

period from the beginning of the eleventh to the beginning of the thirteenth century is the Jewish classic period, and its activities were creative and invigorating in every direction. Hebrew philology was brought to the point of completion; the neo-Hebraic poetry reached its highest expression; and philosophy, hitherto held in low esteem by Arabs and Jews, soared to a height of thought whence the universe appears in a different light. In every cultural activity of that period, the rabbinic Jews occupied the front rank, the Mohammedans, the second, and the Christians the last and the lowest.

Jewish Spain took over the succession from Judaea and Babylonia and increased manifold. The academy of Pumbedita was still in existence, guided by its last representative Hai who shed a dying glory over it. Next to him, and coöperating with him, was the last gaon of Sura, Samuel ben Hofni (d. 1034), Hai's father-in-law, a remarkable man who replaced and even surpassed Saadia, and was thus enabled to rejuvenate the academy of Sura and to prolong the life of the gaonate. Ben Hofni possessed a freedom of spirit that is doubly surprising in a representative of the Talmud, and in the eleventh century. He refused to accept as facts many biblical miracles, such as the serpent's conversation with Eve, the story of Balaam's ass, and the apparition of Samuel, and regarded them as figurative expressions or as dream visions. In his opinion, no one is compelled to accept the statement of the ancients when such statements contradict reason. But his critical spirit made no impression upon the Orient. With the death of these two eminent men, Hai and Ben Hofni, the last hour of the gaonate had struck. The college of Pumbedita, upon the death of Hai, did, indeed, elect a successor, Hezekiah, a great-grandson of David ben Zakkai, who was to unite in his person the exilarchate and the

gaonate. Hezekiah, however, held his office a little less than two years. Some enemies of his maligned him at court, and the last exilarch was imprisoned, tortured, probably in order to disclose the whereabouts of his treasures, robbed of all his property, and finally executed (1040). The gaonate thus died under torture. Babylonia thereby ceased playing a part in Jewish history, and, for a long time, sank into complete insignificance. Hezekiah's sons fled, wandered for a long time, and finally found rest in Spain, where they were treated with honor as the last scions of the royal house of David, and where, under the name of Ibn Daudi, they devoted themselves to the peaceful cultivation of the muses.

As though Andalusia were a Jewish state, the sons of the last chaghan or king of the Chazars, like those of the last exilarch, also sought refuge in Spain. Driven by the Russians from their original kingdom, the Chazars established a new home in the Crimean peninsula, but the ever-increasing power of the Russians proved fatal to them. The Grand Duke Vladinir had embraced Greek Catholicism, and formed an alliance with Byzantium, thereby increasing his power still further; and his son Sviatoslav, with the assistance of the Byzantine emperor Basilius II, finally dealt the death blow to the last Jewish kingdom (1016). The last king of the Chazars, David, was such a loyal Jew that he sent a special messenger to Persia to buy copies of ancient Pentateuchal scrolls for his communities. The last Chazar princes found refuge in Spain, and settled in Toledo.

At the head of the Jewish communities of Spain, after the death of Ibn Shaprut and Ibn J'au, there stood Samuel Ibn Nagdela (992 or 993-1055), a man preëminent for wisdom, virtue, and high station, the first of the post-gaonic authorities. A man of generous impulses, a Hebrew poet and philolo-

gist, a master of Arabic and a profound Talmudist, he combined in his own person all that was noble in Jewish Spanish culture. His Talmudic knowledge he owed to Rabbi Enoch, the rabbi of Cordova; the mastery of the Hebrew to Judah Hayyuj, the founder of scientific Hebrew philology, and the Andalusian capital furnished him sufficient opportunity to acquire other branches of knowledge, especially his skill in the use of the Arabic language.

At the age of twenty, Ibn Nagdela with many others was compelled to leave Cordova as a result of a desperate civil war. Owing to the selfish ambitions of the Emirs (governors) the califates became dismembered and partitioned off into petty principalities, as was the case in Germany and Italy. The Berber chieftain Sulaiman, in a combat with the Arabs and the Slavonic guards of the calif, destroyed the palaces of the capital, and reduced the richest families to beggary (1013). The districts that broke away from Cordova formed several small states, under Arabic, Berber, or Slavonian princes. One tribe of the Berbers—Sinhaga—under a chieftain Maksen, founded the kingdom of Granada (1020) that contained a large Jewish population, with Malaga as its capital. The most prominent Jewish families emigrated to Granada, Toledo, and even to the distant Saragossa as a result of the disturbances in Cordova. Ibn Nagdela settled in Malaga, where he eked out a meager existence from a small business. His leisure he devoted to the study of the Talmud and to the acquisition of languages. Besides Hebrew, he knew Arabic, Chaldaic, and four other languages; and it was due to his knowledge of languages and to his calligraphy that he reached such an exalted position as was never occupied by a Jew before him since the fall of the Jewish state.

The vizier of Habus, the second king of Granada,

by name of Al-Kasim ibn Al-Arif, occupied a palace in Malaga, a short distance from Samuel's shop. A confidential female slave of the vizier's, who was charged with the duty of reporting to him the news of the city, had her reports regularly written by her neighbor, the Jewish shopkeeper. These reports, by their excellence of composition and calligraphy, attracted the vizier's attention to their writer, and Ibn Nagdela was induced to become his private secretary (about 1025). Thus coming in daily contact with him, the vizier soon learned to appreciate Ibn Nagdela's mastery of Arabic style as well as his deep political insight, and consulted him in important matters of state. As Samuel's counsel invariably led to success, the Arabic statesman undertook nothing without consulting him. When the vizier fell seriously sick, and King Habus was in despair how to proceed in the complicated political relations with the neighboring states, the dying Ibn Al-Arif pointed to his Jewish secretary, and urged upon the king to appoint him his adviser. The king of Granada, who, as a Berber, had less prejudice against Jews than the Arabic Moslems, accordingly appointed Samuel Ibn Nagdela his Minister of State (Katib), charged with the conduct of diplomatic affairs (1027). The shopkeeper of Malaga resided henceforth in the royal palace, and the disciple of R. Enoch had an important voice in the politics of the Pyrenean Peninsula. A Mohammedan king who selects a vizier does, indeed, reign, and has despotic moods, but he does not rule. That is the business of his chief minister who is responsible to him for it with his head. But Habus had no reason to regret his choice. His kingdom prospered under the guidance of the resourceful and energetic Jewish statesman. Samuel understood the art of humoring the Berber king. He composed a laudatory poem in his honor

in seven languages, and nothing could be more flattering to a Mohammedan ruler than to see himself glorified in artistic verse. He gained popularity among the Moslem population by his modest demeanor. Versatile, shrewd, ever master of himself, Ibn Nagdela was always courteous, knew how to take advantage of circumstances, and possessed the gift of disarming his opponents. Though his mind was extremely active, he spoke but little but thought much. His wisdom and piety guarded him against the superciliousness that is characteristic of upstarts and that renders them odious. For this reason, Samuel was able to maintain himself in his high office for nearly thirty years. It is true that he had enemies, bitter enemies. Fanatic Mohammedans regarded as an insult to their religion the elevation of an "unbeliever" to an exalted station that practically placed the government in his hands. But fortune smiled on the Jewish statesman. His enemies were powerless against him.

When King Habus died (1037), a dispute arose over the succession. Most of the Berber nobles, and also some Jews—Joseph Ibn Migas, Isaac ben Leon, and Nehemiah Iskaffa—were in favor of the younger son Balkin. A smaller party, to which Samuel also belonged, preferred the older son, Badis. The more numerous party was about to crown Balkin when he voluntarily abdicated in favor of his older brother. Badis became king, and Samuel not only retained his former office, but became practically king of Granada, since Badis, occupied with the pursuit of pleasure, paid little attention to affairs of state. Balkin's adherents had to leave Granada, the three above-named Jews among them; the latter wandered to Seville, and were given a favorable reception at the hands of its king, Mohammed Algafer, who was an enemy of Badis. One of the three fugitives, Joseph ibn Migas, was

raised to an exalted station by the king of Seville and became the ancestor of a great Talmudic luminary.

Fortune or Providence averted a great danger that threatened to involve Samuel and the Jewish communities in ruin. To hold his own against the hostile Arabic population of Seville and Cordova, the king of Granada had to form an alliance with the Slavonian prince Zohair, who seized the territory of Almeria on the sea. This alliance was to be renewed with Badis upon Habus' death. But Ibn Abbas, Zohair's minister, an arrogant and fanatic Mohammedan, assisted by Ibn Bekanna, the governor of Malaga, was determined to prevent the renewal of this alliance as long as Samuel remained Badis' adviser. Zohair, with his minister, Ibn Abbas, and a numerous retinue, arrived in Granada suddenly, demanded unreasonable conditions for the renewal of the alliance, and insisted upon Samuel's removal from office. Had Badis yielded, the life of Samuel and the entire Jewish community would have been forfeited. But the very overweening impudence that prompted Ibn Abbas' demands aroused the anger of Badis and the Berber war party against him. When Zohair and his retinue left Granada, the Berber troops lay in wait for them in the passes, and destroyed the bridges that led into Almeria. This strategy was successful. Some of Zohair's troops were slain, some took to flight, while others joined the enemy. Ibn Abbas was captured, imprisoned, and executed. Samuel and the Jewish community of Granada rejoiced and thanked God for this unexpected deliverance. Samuel composed a hymn commemorative of this occasion, and desired to have the anniversary of that day of salvation perpetuated like the festival of Purim. After this incident he rose still higher in Badis' favor.

Both Habus and Badis invested their Jewish vizier with special authority over the Jewish community of Granada, such as was formerly possessed by Ibn Shaprut and Ibn J'au. Samuel's official title was Nagid (Prince). But Samuel was, at the same time, also the rabbi of Granada; was the head of the academy, delivered lectures on the Talmud to the students, decided questions of ritual and civil law directed to him, and discharged all other rabbinical functions. With the same pen with which he drew up documents of state he wrote dissertations and commentaries on the Talmud, and a manual on Talmudic methodology. Ibn Nagdela was also a neo-Hebraic poet. He wrote a "New Book of Psalms," a "New Book of Proverbs," and a "New Ecclesiastes" after the ancient models, as well as laudatory poems and epigrams. His poems, however, lack inspiration, and are cumbrous and obscure.

A man of such nobility of soul and of devotion to wisdom and to religion was naturally a patron of science and of poetry. Samuel was in correspondence with the great men of his generation in Irak, Syria, Egypt, and Africa, and particularly with the last great gaon, R. Hai, and with R. Nissim of Kairwan, and contributed of his means to them. He had copies of books made which he distributed among poor students, encouraged dormant talent, and was the protecting genius of his coreligionists from far and near. A writer of the succeeding generation justly describes him in these words: "In Samuel's time, wisdom was raised out of its lowliness, and the stars of knowledge shone resplendent. God had endowed him with a lofty soul, a spirit that touched the highest spheres, full of love for science and its promoters, that he might glorify religion and its students." An Arabic poet sings of Ishmael (as the Mohammedans called him):

"If man could tell the true and false
And could the difference understand,
Instead of kissing Mecca's stone,
They would, O Ishmael, kiss thy hand. . . ."

The position of the Jews in the kingdom of Granada was very high. They occupied offices of state and served also in the army. In no country in the world did they then enjoy such absolute equality as in this Ziridic state.

Next to the Talmud and poetry, Ibn Nagdela occupied himself also with the study of the forms and structure of the Hebrew language. In this branch, however, he followed strictly in the steps of his teacher Hayyuj and added nothing new. In fact, so great was his admiration for Hayyuj that he refused to recognize the achievements of the greatest philologist of all time, and even opposed him with a certain bitterness. It is remarkable enough that, busy as he was with affairs of state, he managed to find time to write twenty-two essays on Hebrew philology, though most of them were only occasional polemics hurled against the greatest Hebrew philologist Ibn Janah, who was no less an honor to Spanish Jewry than the vizier Ibn Nagdela himself.

Jonah Marinus (with the Arabic name of Abu al-Walid Merwan Ibn Janah, born about 995, died about 1050) likewise received his education at Cordova at the time when the enthusiasm for the Hebrew language was at its highest, and studied medicine in the medical school of Cordova founded by the calif Al-Hakim. Ibn Janah dedicated his life to biblical exegesis, and achieved such a mastery of his subject as has not been surpassed to the present day. Posterity has learned a great deal from Ibn Janah, but Hebrew philologists and biblical exegetes can learn still more from him. Like his oppo-

nent Ibn Nagdela, he left Cordova during the disturbances occasioned by Sulaiman (1013), and settled in Saragossa, where culture was as yet a stranger. The Jews of Saragossa, or the majority of them, still harbored the prejudice that researches in general, and grammatic researches in particular, were dangerous to rabbinic Judaism. This hostile atmosphere, however, did not prevent Ibn Janah from absorbing himself ever more profoundly in the study of the structure of the Hebrew language and of the exegesis of the Bible.

Feeling the advance of age, which, with Plato, he called the "mother of forgetfulness," he addressed himself to the task of writing his chief work, in which he summed up the results of all his investigations and all the wealth of his inner life. Ibn Jānah not only created the Hebrew syntax, but developed it almost to the point of perfection. But even more significant than his grammatical views were the illuminating principles he laid down as a guide to the interpretation and to the understanding of the Bible. None before him, and but few since to this day, succeeded like Ibn Janah in understanding the niceties of the Scriptures and in elucidating them so strikingly. From the height of biblical exegesis which he attained, the work of his predecessors, from the first Karaite exegetes to Saadia, Menahem, Dunash and Hayyuj, appears amateurish. Jonah ibn Janah was the first to raise biblical exegesis to an independent science with a distinctive aim. He wanted to assist the Scriptures in revealing their own divine contents. For the perverse method of interpretation that rendered the language of the Scriptures puerile and devoid of thought, he substituted a simple method of explanation, true to the logical intent of the prophets, that rendered their thought all the more sublime.

Ibn Janah was daring enough to account for

some unintelligible, enigmatic and apparently absurd passages of the Bible by an ellipse or by a change of letter or word. More than two hundred obscure passages he elucidates simply and logically by the assumption that through a slip of the pen which is likely to happen in writing, the author in question used a wrong word for the proper one. By suggesting the proper word, Ibn Janah restored the correct meaning of many verses hitherto interpreted in an unsatisfactory manner. He was the first intelligent biblical critic. Although he firmly believed in the divinity of the Scriptures, he did not place the expressions of the Bible above criticism when they apparently conveyed no sense, or were absurd; he assumed that, though filled with the divine spirit, they were subject to the laws of human expression as soon as they were addressed to man. Ibn Janah was a sober thinker and was opposed to every fantastic, eccentric tendency. For this reason he had no inclination for poetry; he confesses that though he tried he failed in his efforts to write poetry. In this respect he was the very antipode of the third genius of the triumvirate of this period, Solomon ibn Gabirol, with whom his relations seemed to have been strained though living in the same city.

A richly endowed personality, an ideal phenomenon, at once a sweet singer and a profound thinker was Solomon Ibn Gabirol (or, in Arabic, Abu Ayyub Sulaiman ibn Yahya, b. about 1021, d. about 1050). Ibn Gabirol lived solely for song and philosophic reflection, and everything else that had no relation to poetry and to philosophy appeared to him insignificant. "Fleeing from things earthly, Ibn Gabirol dedicated his pure, unstained soul to the noblest aim." His father Judah who lived in Cordova seems to have emigrated to Malaga simultaneously with Ibn Nagdela on account of the Ber-

ber disturbances, and there the poetic and philosophic genius of the century first saw the light of day.

Bereft of his parents at an early age and left without kith or kin, the young poet felt his orphanhood keenly. Pathetically he sings:

"My body plods upon the earth,
My spirit soars among the clouds,
My heart—it feels the weight of eighty years."

His loneliness weighed upon his sensitive, poetic nature. The lad was a stranger to the joys of childhood. The sunshine of laughter hardly crossed the features of the youth. Abandoned of man, he fell back upon his rich inner life; and poetry and philosophy were the two angels that spread their pinions over him and guarded him against despair. But they could not fill his heart with joy. While still in his adolescence, Ibn Gabirol, with a perfect mastery of the art of poetry, exclaims in grief:

"My song is warped by care, and mixed with sighs my joy;
And see I laugh, my heart for very anguish cries.
O friend! Shall I but mourn, a sixteen-year-old lad,
Who should with childhood play, as a lily with the dew?"

At an age when most men still indulge in the trifles of childhood, Ibn Gabirol was already a finished poet. One can easily see from his poems that he did not have to search for words or rimes, for thoughts and imagery—but that they flowed spontaneously from his soul. At the same time, he knew the art of moderation, and did not pass beyond the line that separates beauty from exaggeration. The

hoary Hebrew language was rejuvenated by the glowing heart of this youth, and became the faithful interpreter of his thoughts and feelings. The Hebrew language grew supple in his hands; he fondled and beautified her, and she, in turn, nestled close to him like a lover. The young poet also enriched the Hebrew metre by the invention of many new forms and brought it to greater perfection.

In his loneliness, the young poet found a friend and a protector in the person of a man whom he immortalized in his poems, but who otherwise remained unknown. Jekuthiel ibn Hasan seemed to have occupied in Saragossa, under King Yahya ibn Mondhir, an exalted station, similar to that of Ibn Nagdela in Granada. He is described as a "prince of princes, lords hanging on his lips," and as a generous man "whose mouth is a fountain of salvation, whose heart overflows with generosity, and whose lips are always true." This man it was who for a time bestowed his love and his generosity upon the forsaken poet, and was his support and his comfort. An untoward fate, however, soon deprived him of his noble friend. The latter probably became involved in the ruin of the king of Saragossa, who was murdered in the course of a palace revolution, and he, too, was slain (1039). Profound was the grief of the Jewish communities of Northern Spain. Poets vied with each other in decorating his grave with wreaths of song. Ibn Gabirol's elegy on his benefactor is truly affecting, and its hundred beautiful verses are an everlasting memorial both to the departed and to the singer. The very opening lines profoundly express the full worth of Jekuthiel:

"If Jekuthiel could pass away,
The skies themselves are transitory."

The tragic death of his benefactor affected Ibn Gabirol deeply. Everything looked dismal to him. He complained of being the victim of misunderstanding, of treachery on the part of his friends, and of persecution. With the self-tormenting sensitiveness characteristic of born poets, he saw himself surrounded by enemies on all sides, and disparaged by the envious. His poetic production again wore the garb of mourning. But what might have overwhelmed others only added to his poetic powers; he was just then approaching the very pinnacle of his poetic and literary greatness. The making of verse was so easy to him that, at the age of nineteen (1040), he composed a rimed Hebrew grammar, with all its tedious rules, in four hundred verses.

While in Saragossa, Ibn Gabirol wrote a short treatise on ethics (1045) that did not as yet betray the profundity of his latter philosophic works, but is remarkable enough for its originality and for the familiarity with the masters of philosophy it displays on the part of its author who had hardly entered upon manhood. It is particularly surprising how the young author could have acquired such a deep insight into the psychology of man and in worldly affairs—an acquisition ordinarily associated with the varied experiences of active, commercial life. This essay "On the Improvement of the Soul" contained criticism against some prominent men of Saragossa whose enmity he incurred in consequence, and who either procured his banishment or rendered his stay in that city intolerable. He left the city which he stigmatized in a pathetic poem as a second Gomorrah, decided to leave Spain forever and to migrate to Egypt, Palestine or Babylonia. This decision, however, he did not carry into execution, but wandered from place to place in Spain,

pouring forth his real or imaginary sorrows in beautiful, perfect verses.

It seems that Ibn Gabirol finally found protection in the patronage of Samuel Ibn Nagdela, and this period of quietude enabled him to absorb himself still further in the study of philosophy which he loved as much as poetry and called his "mother." Though still a mere youth, he developed a system of thought dealing with the highest problems that occupy the human mind. What is the highest aim of man? What is the nature and the origin of the soul, and whither does it go after leaving its tenement of clay? How is God to be conceived, and how was it that He who is the absolute unity and absolute perfection produced the visible world that is so full of defects and subject to changes? Ibn Gabirol attempts to find a solution for these and other metaphysical questions, but he addresses himself not to the soul of faith, but to the reasoning mind, in order to assign to man his place in the universe, to open his eyes to the unseen spiritual world above him, and to make him understand the sensuous world beneath him so as to enable him to discover the link that connects these two worlds. In this system he develops such a wealth of ideas and such a profundity of thought that the thinker must take great pains if he wishes to follow him. These complicated thoughts, however, are presented in a remarkably easy and intelligible manner. Indeed, one part of this philosophic system he reduced to poetic form (Kether Malkut, Crown of the Kingdom), a hymn teeming with truth and sublimity.

Ibn Gabirol's philosophic treatise called "The Foundation of Life" or "The Causes," written in Arabic in the form of a dialogue after Plato, exerted but little influence in Jewish circles. Jewish thinkers found its contents rather odd, its form of argumentation too complicated, and its analysis too

abrupt and unsatisfying. Among the Arabs and the Christian scholastics, on the other hand, Ibn Gabirol's system attracted great attention. A century after its appearance, his chief work was translated into Latin through the collaboration of a Christian priest and a baptized Jew. Some of the schoolmen accepted Ibn Gabirol's views, others combated them; all paid due attention to them.

Another Jewish philosopher of this classic period, Bahya ibn Joseph ibn Pakuda (flourished about 1050), followed a different tendency from that of Ibn Gabirol, and founded an entirely original ethical theology of Judaism in a book called "The Duties of the Heart" (Hobot ha-Lebaboth), written in Arabic. Bahya Ibn Pakuda's aim was the inwardizing of Judaism; in his own view, the inner duties imposed by the conscience were infinitely higher than the ritualistic duties demanded by the religious code. Like the pagan-Christian teachers of the first century, he divided Judaism into purely religious and moral laws on the one hand, and into ceremonial law on the other, and regards the former as of higher value. He decries the study of the Talmud with its legal discussions if it does not lead to a higher appreciation of the "duties of the heart." The ceremonial law corresponds in his views to the body of man, the ethical law to man's soul. The "duties of the heart" are the foundation of Judaism; the observance of ceremonial law, unaccompanied by sympathy and moral rectitude, are absolutely valueless. Bahya states that his conscience prompted him to map out for himself a line of conduct in order to know how to fulfill his duties at every hour and on every occasion "so that his thoughts, feelings and actions might be at one with God." Having written such an outline, he regarded it as his duty to spread the light which was his among his coreligionists "who were lax in the ob-

servance of the ceremonial laws and even more so in the 'duties of the heart.' "

This tendency, the inwardizing of religion as the basis of Judaism, Bahya followed to its extreme logical conclusion, to the point of the practice of penance which represented to him the highest degree of wisdom to which man could attain. It is, indeed, impossible for all human beings to renounce the world and its activities, since this would lead to depopulation which is opposed to God's design; but there must be a class, given to meditation and renunciation, that was to serve as an example to the world as to how the passions can be curbed and controlled. Bahya was on the point of glorifying monasticism and of introducing it into Judaism, and the tendency toward monasticism in the Middle Ages was marked enough both in the Mohammedan and in the Christian world. Like his younger contemporary, the Mohammedan philosopher Gazzali, Ibn Bahya might have devoted himself to a life of monastic seclusion and contemplation as a Jewish *Sufi,* had not Judaism militated against such an excess of enthusiasm. In the moderation of Jewish life, monasticism could not strike root.

These were the noteworthy contemporaries of Ibn Nagdela in the first half of the eleventh century. When Samuel died (1055), his excellent son Abu Husain Joseph (1031-66) succeeded him both in the vizierate and in the leadership of the Jewish communities of Granada, though he was still a very young man. Joseph received a princely education under the best instructors his father could procure from various countries, and showed great promise from his earliest youth. A master of Arabic like his father, Joseph was chosen private secretary to the crown prince Balkin while Samuel was still living. Though reared in luxury and of a strikingly handsome appearance, Joseph led a life of ascetic

frugality, and presented a striking contrast to the riotous excesses of the Mohammedan nobles. As a minister Joseph labored for the welfare of the state. As the acknowledged rabbi of the community, he presided over a Talmudic school and delivered discourses on the Talmud. But he differed from his father in two respects: in the too conspicuous appointments of his coreligionists to high offices in the government, and in his haughty demeanor toward subordinates. As a result, he aroused the hatred of the Berbers, the dominant population of Granada, against himself and the Jews; and a few incidents that occurred during his vizierate fanned that hatred into violent wrath. There was a mutual antipathy between Joseph and the crown-prince Balkin, whose secretary he had formerly been. Balkin died suddenly, supposedly through poison. King Badis thereupon ordered the execution of several of the prince's servants and wives as guilty of the crime, and the others fled for fear of a similar fate. The people of Granada, however, accused Joseph of poisoning the prince. Another incident in which Joseph proved not only his humaneness, but also his statesmanship and his loyalty to his master, seems to have cost him Badis' favor. Between the Berbers who gained the rulership in Granada and in other parts of Spain, and the native Arabs there existed such a bitter race antagonism that each city containing a mixed population was divided into two hostile camps. Badis, who was suspicious of the Arabs and who feared a conspiracy on their part, conceived the scheme of ordering the massacre of all the Arabs of Granada while they were assembled in their mosques on a Friday for public worship. This plan he communicated to Joseph with the remark that his decision was unalterable, and charged him with absolute secrecy. Joseph protested against this scheme both

as inhuman and as a political blunder, but the king persisted, and issued his orders to the commanders of his troops. But Joseph, determining to save the king from the inevitable results of such folly, even at the risk of his own life, sent secret word to the prominent Arabs of Granada to absent themselves from the mosque on the following Friday. The Arabs understood the hint, and acted accordingly; and Badis' troops found in the mosque only Berbers and a few Arabs of the lower classes. Badis had to abandon his plan, but vented his anger upon his minister, whom he suspected of having betrayed his secret, and reproached him bitterly. Joseph replied frankly that the king might thank God for having saved him from inevitable danger, and added: "The time will yet come when thou wilt approve my views of the matter and sanction the advice I gave thee." A Berber sheik also supported Joseph, and Badis seemed appeased. But his enmity of Joseph still lingered in his heart, and he was filled with suspicion against him. Joseph had to resort to the employment of spies who were to inform him of every utterance of the king, in order to hold his ground. The Berber population, realizing that the vizier had lost the king's confidence, began to plot his destruction and that of his coreligionists. Rumors, detrimental to Joseph, were widely circulated. His enemies gained the upper hand. A fanatic Mohammedan poet, Abu Ishak of Elvira, by an inflammatory poem directed against Joseph, soon fanned the hatred of the Moslems to the point of fury.

This fury soon led to murder. The troops of Al-Motassem of Almeria, a neighboring prince, made an incursion into the domain of Granada, and are said to have declared that their master had a secret understanding with Joseph who agreed to betray Granada into his hands. This rumor, in all probability, was started by Al-Motassem himself in order

to destroy Joseph, whom he feared and hated, and it accomplished its purpose. As soon as that report reached Granada, the Berber troops, accompanied by a mob, made an attack upon Joseph's palace. Joseph tried to disguise himself by blackening his face with coal, but he was recognized, murdered, and crucified in front of the gate of Granada. The evil which had threatened his father from Almeria fell upon the son. All the Jews of Granada who could not save themselves by flight succumbed to the fury of the assassins. Fifteen hundred Jewish families met their death on the same day, and their houses were destroyed. Only a few escaped the massacre, among them Joseph's wife and his young son Azariah, who fled to Lucena. In their hurried flight they could take with them so little of their wealth that they had to be supported by the Lucena community. Joseph's considerable library was partly destroyed and partly sold. The grief over the Jewish martyrs of Granada and over the noble Jewish prince was profound. Even an Arabic poet, Ibn Alfara, who had sung Joseph's praises while he was living, dedicated an elegy to his memory, in which occur the words: "Mine is the true religion, and that religion commands me to shed a tear for the Jew."

The uprising against Joseph ibn Nagdela in Granada was the first persecution of the Jews in the Pyrenean Peninsula under the domination of Islam. It staggered all the communities of Spain at first, but did not discourage them. It remained an isolated case. The incident in Granada did not deter other kings or emirs from employing Jews in diplomatic capacities, and an Arabic historian complains that "the princes of the faithful," given to pleasure, turned over their power to the Jews, and made them hagibs, viziers and private secretaries. The example of the Mohammedan courts reacted upon the

Christian states also, and the position of the Jews of Spain remained at first unaffected by the progress of the Christian arms and by the gradual dissolution of the Mohammedan principalities. Under the dominion of the cross they felt as much at home in Spain as under that of the crescent, and could indulge undisturbed in their intellectual pursuits. It was the extensive conquests of Mohammedan Spain by the Christians, and the first crusade against the Mohammedans in the Orient, that led to fundamental changes in the condition of the Jews of Western Europe.

In the gradual transformation of Spain from a Mohammedan to a Christian country, the Jews played not an insignificant part. To some extent they assisted in placing the mine that was destined to explode beneath the fleet of their descendants. The first mighty blast that was to shatter the dominion of Islam in the Pyrenean Peninsula was charged by the equally shrewd and valiant King Alfonso VI of Castille, who took advantage of the dismemberment of the Islamic kingdom into petty states to extend his own dominion to the south. As the task to which he addressed himself, the conquest of the Mohammedan kingdoms and the driving of the Moslems from Spain, could best be furthered by stimulating dissensions and mutual jealousies among the petty Islamic rulers which would weaken them all, Alfonso was in need of skilled diplomatists. His knights were too coarse, and his citizens too ignorant, for missions of a delicate nature. In the Mohammedan courts of Toledo, Seville and Granada there prevailed a tone of refinement and cleverness, full of allusions to the glorious history and literature of the Arabs. An ambassador who wished to accomplish anything, or to obtain any information at these courts, had to be not only a master of the Arabic language but also fa-

miliar with Arabic literature and with the clever speech of the courtiers. Among Alfonso's subjects the Jews alone were adapted for diplomatic undertakings, and for this reason Alfonso employed Jews in his diplomatic negotiations with the Mohammedan princes. One such Jewish diplomatist was Amram ben Isaac ibn Shalbib, originally Alfonso's physician in ordinary. As Ibn Shalbib understood Arabic well and had a deep insight into the prevailing political conditions, Alfonso appointed him his private secretary and entrusted him with important affairs of state. Alfonso had also another Jewish adviser, Cidelus, with whom he stood on very intimate terms despite his taciturnity and inaccessibleness, and whom he permitted to speak with a frankness that none of the Spanish nobles and grandees would have dared employ. Alfonso, who was free from bigotry and whose views of life were broadened by contact with the Mohammedan princes, not only distinguished a few Jews, but granted equality to all the Jews who lived in his states. While the old Visigothic code (forum judicum) was not formally repealed, its provisions became a dead letter, and were supplanted by the consuetudinary laws (fueros), the outgrowth of several centuries of Arabic dominion, that made no distinction between Christians, Jews and Mohammedans. By sanctioning this consuetudinary law, Alfonso legalized the equality of citizenship. Jews were, under certain circumstances, allowed the distinction of a duel, which was the prerogative of the aristocracy, and served in the army. The darkness of medievalism seemed about to be dispelled.

But the intolerance of the Church would not sanction Jewish equality in a Christian country. The then Pope Hildebrand, or Gregory VII, the mightiest of the mighty, before whom kings and nations crawled in the dust, desired to humiliate the help-

less Jews also. In the Council of Rome (1078), he issued a canonical law to the effect that Jews were to occupy no office in Christendom, and to be placed in no position of authority over Christians. This canonical decree was directed primarily against Christian Spain that, owing to its peculiar position as the defender of the faith against the Arabs, assumed a somewhat independent attitude toward Rome. Accordingly, Gregory addressed an imperative letter to Alfonso VI (about 1080), in which he said: "Impelled as we feel to wish thee well in thy undertakings, we must also censure thee for thy wrongdoing. We admonish thy love to see to it that Jews no longer rule over Christians and have power over them. To subordinate Christians to Jews, and subject them to Jewish authority is nothing else than to oppress the Church of God, and to exalt the synagog of Satan. To desire to please the enemies of Christ is to despise Christ himself." Alfonso, however, would not permit the intolerance of the Church to interfere with his plans. He ignored the Council of Rome and the papal letter, and retained his Jewish advisers.

Alfonso was just then engaged in a plan for the conquest of the kingdom of Toledo. In order to bring this scheme to a successful issue, it was necessary to secure the neutrality, and, if possible, also the assistance of the other Arabic kings; and for his purpose Alfonso needed his Jewish diplomatists. Through an alliance with the noble and valiant Al-Mutammed ibn Abbad, king of Seville, Alfonso conquered the ancient and important city of Toledo (1085), the first bulwark of the Spanish Mohammedans against the onrushing power of the Christians. The conqueror of Toledo guaranteed to the Jews of that city and of the territory belonging to it the possessions of all the liberties they enjoyed under the sway of the Mohammedans. The main

points of these privileges consisted in the right of each community to administer its internal affairs independently, to impose the communal taxes, to elect its own officials, rabbis and judges (united in one person), and in the right of the rabbi-judges, with their tribunal, to settle all civil disputes in accordance with Talmudic law. They were given jurisdiction even in criminal cases, and were allowed to impose capital punishment, particularly upon traitors or informers (Malsin) from their own midst who threatened a community or an individual with ruin.

Alfonso, however, did not rest content with the possession of Toledo, which he elevated again to the capital of the kingdom, but was bent upon new conquests. His first aim was to acquire the domain of the king of Seville, his ally, who ruled over Cordova also. He suddenly dropped the mask of friendship, and sent his Jewish ambassador Isaac ibn Shalbib at the head of five hundred Christian knights to the court of Al-Mutammed to urge upon him such demands in which he could not honorably acquiesce. The mission cost Ibn Shalbib his life. Faithful to his instructions, Ibn Shalbib presented his demands in such firm and determined language that Al-Mutammed flew into a passion, ignored the inviolability of ambassadors, and ordered the execution of Ibn Shalbib and the incarceration of his retinue. It is possible that the shrewd Alfonso counted on such an eventuality which would supply him with a pretext for an open rupture. The strained relations between Alfonso and Al-Mutammed induced the latter to call to his assistance the conqueror of Northern Africa, the Almoravidean prince Yusuf ibn Teshufin. The African hero came, and brought in his train the subjection and the ruin of the Mohammedan princes of Andalusia. His arrival decided likewise the fate of the Jews of

Mohammedan Spain. Yusuf ibn Teshufin brought a large army from Africa which was enormously swelled by the contingents of Mohammedan-Spanish troops. Alfonso likewise gathered a large army. Forty thousand Jews, uniformed alike in yellow and black turbans, are said to have been under arms in the two hostile camps.

Christianity and Islam stood facing each other on Spanish soil ready for a struggle of life and death, both represented by great generals. When the two armies were ready for battle on Friday (Oct. 23, 1086), Alfonso proposed an armistice till Monday, so that neither the Mohammedans nor the Jews of both armies and the Christians should have to violate their respective Sabbaths. Yusuf accepted this proposal, whereupon Alfonso fell upon the Mohammedans suddenly on Friday in the hope of taking them by surprise. But this strategy failed. The battle of Zalaka resulted in a sweeping victory for the Moslems; Alfonso escaped with only a few knights. The victory, however, was of advantage only to Yusuf. The conqueror made himself master of Spain, and humiliated the native princes. Southern Spain became for a long time the scene of bloody conflicts. The Jews suffered considerably during the disturbances occasioned by the Almoravides, Alfonso, and the adventurous knight Roderigo Cid, immortalized in Spanish romances, with his motley crowd of Christian and Mohammedan riff-raff. These troubles, however, were of a political character; they suffered, as Jews, no more than the other inhabitants. The Almoravides were no fanatics; they pursued only political aims, though the war they waged against the Christians was styled a holy war. The African victors even restored the Jews of Granada all the property of which they had been robbed twenty years before during the persecution under Badis.

The disturbances consequent upon the wars did not dampen the ardor of the Spanish Jews for scientific and poetic pursuits. The study of the Talmud, however, received greater attention than that of exegesis and philosophy. The only representatives of non-Talmudic studies at that time were Moses Ibn Gikatilla and Judah ben Balam, both of whom published treatises on biblical exegesis and Hebrew philology. But these men followed in the trodden paths of Ibn Hayyuj and Ibn Janah and added nothing of importance, though the former was critical enough to recognize that several psalms were written not by King David but at a later date, while all his contemporaneous Jewish and Christian biblical exegetes ascribed the authorship of the entire book to King David. The Talmud, on the other hand, was fostered with loving care, and became, in a measure, the centre of literary activity. The influence of the two Ibn Nagdelas, father and son, who, in their exalted station, attached the utmost importance to the study of the Talmud, is not to be underestimated in this connection. Able Jewish statesmen as well as rabbis were animated by a certain whimsical love for the Talmud, and published larger works or smaller dissertations on this subject. It is, however, to be noted as a mark of progress that the Talmud was no longer explained in the traditional manner, but became an object of independent and critical investigation.

The most eminent Talmudic scholar of this period was Isaac ben Jacob Alfasi (1013-1103.) A native of Fez in northern Africa, and a disciple of the two distinguished Talmudic authorities of his native land, R. Hananel and R. Nissim, Alfasi concentrated his ingenuity upon the Talmud, and paved the way for its correct understanding and application. Disdaining mere authority, Alfasi penetrated

R. Isaac Alphasi

to the very core of the Talmud, separated the positive and essential legal decisions from the non-essential and incidental, ignored the decisions of the geonim when they seemed baseless to his critical views, and codified all the practical laws into a "Compendium of Laws," which in the course of time supplanted all former works of a similar nature and assumed superior authoritativeness. This code, which is in effect an abridgment of the Talmud, omitting as it does all legal discussions and embodying all positive, practical laws, gained for its author universal fame; and when, as a result of political accusations, he was compelled to flee from Africa barefooted and seek refuge in Spain (Cordova), he was received with open arms and greeted with the respect due to a great authority.

But the two most eminent men of Southern Spain, Isaac ben Baruch Albalia and Isaac ben Judah ibn Ghayyat, conceived a hostility to Alfasi. Isaac Albalia (1035-1094), formerly a *protégé* of Samuel and Joseph ibn Nagdela, was a Talmudic scholar, poet and astronomer. Upon Joseph's violent death, he fled from Granada to Seville, became the astronomer (astrologer) of King Al-Mutammed, and the rabbi and the head of the Jewish communities of the kingdom (1077), a position similar to that of Ibn Shaprut and Ibn Nagdela. Isaac ben Ghayyat (1030-1089), a member of a wealthy family of Lucena, held in great esteem by the Ibn Nagdelas, and a great admirer of that family on his part, was the rabbi of Lucena, a Talmudist, poet and philosopher. When Joseph ibn Nagdela's family fled to Lucena, Ibn Ghayyat endeavored to have Joseph's son, Azariah, chosen the head of the Jewish community of Lucena and of the other Spanish communities. Azariah, however, died soon after, and through Ibn Ghayyat's influence the Lucena community pensioned Joseph's

widow and supported her respectably until her dying day. A great Talmudic authority, Ibn Ghayyat, like Isaac Albalia, was a rather poor poet, though some of his liturgical compositions, adopted by many communities, betray spontaneity and lyric beauty. These two men, either out of jealousy of the honors showered upon Alfasi, or out of dislike to his independence in the treatment of the Talmud, became his opponents, and attacked him by word of mouth and in writing. As Alfasi defended himself, a bitter controversy ensued that ended only with the death of Ibn Ghayyat and of Albalia. Alfasi, it seems, succeeded his enemy Ibn Ghayyat to the rabbinate of Lucena. Albalia died in Africa whither, a loyal servant, he followed his unfortunate master Al-Mutammed, who was dethroned and imprisoned by the conqueror of Africa, Yusuf ibn Teshufin. Upon his dying bed, Albalia charged his seventeen-year-old son Baruch, who was weeping bitterly at the destitution that awaited him after his father's demise, to repair to Alfasi in Lucena, and to tell his enemy that, at the brink of the grave, he had forgiven him all that Alfasi ever said or wrote against him, in the expectation that he would be forgiven in return, and in the hope that Alfasi would deal kindly with his enemy's son. Baruch carried out his father's wishes. Alfasi embraced his enemy's son with tears in his eyes, promised to be a father to him, and kept his promise. One does not know whom to admire most, the one who reposed the greatest confidence in his enemy's generosity or the one who did not disappoint that confidence. Baruch ibn Albalia became one of Alfasi's most distinguished disciples.

Jewish Spain, the center of all tendencies in Judaism, witnessed at this time a Karaitic movement also. Karaite communities existed in Spain from time immemorial, but they had sunk into lethargy

and oblivion. Toward the end of the eleventh century, however, new life was infused into this inert mass by Ibn Altaras, who came from Jerusalem to Castile, bringing with him a Karaisim with a philosophic tinge, and who sought to make converts among the rabbinites of Spain. After his death, his activities were continued by his wife, who was a scholarly woman and whom the Karaites regarded as an oracle and styled "the scholar" (al-Malimah). The rabbinites, however, were too powerful to permit any proselytising on the part of the Karaites. One of Alfonso's Jewish favorites, Joseph ibn Al-Faraj Alkabri (possibly identical with Cidellus) obtained the king's permission to persecute the Karaites, and expelled them from all the cities of Castile, excepting one which he left them as a place of refuge. It is hardly likely that the leading rabbis of Spain subscribed to such a policy of intolerance.

At the time when Spain produced a profusion of distinguished personalities, there was a great scarcity of able, productive men in France and Germany. The social status of the Jews was as yet unimpaired in those countries, though they were required to pay a kind of Jew-tax to the princes in whose domains they lived. Even if isolated persecutions occurred here and there, there were no generally hostile feelings against them. Prelates of the Church now protected Jews from the violence of besotted mobs, instead of goading the latter on as was formerly done. Pope Alexander II praised such ecclesiastics for their protection of the Jews, and referred to the sentiments of Pope Gregory I to the effect that no violence be done the Jews. To kill Saracens was a Christian duty, because they persecuted Christians; the Jews, on the other hand, who keep the peace, should be left undisturbed. It was not due to social conditions that the Jews of

France and of Germany lagged behind their Spanish brethren, but to their lack of intellectual impetus. They were not below the level of their Christian compatriots, but did not rise above it either. They occupied themselves chiefly with the study of the Talmud to which R. Gershom had given the impulse. But that study was pursued in an antiquated manner, and with a total absence of critical views.

In Germany, Lorraine was the classic land of Talmudic study, and "the wise men of Lorraine," a designation by which the Talmudic teachers of Mayence and Worms were primarily understood, were regarded as absolute authorities. In this country (1034) a synagog was completed in Worms in Byzantine style, with pillars and chapels, that, in its time, was regarded as a magnificent work of art, and which legend glorified still further. This synagog was the gift of a childless couple, Jacob ben David and Rachel, for which the grateful community perpetuated their names by a tablet and by an annual memorial service.

The authorities of Lorraine at this time were Isaac Halevi in Worms, the father of three learned sons, Jacob ben Yakar in Mayence and Isaac ben Judah first in Worms and afterward in Mayence. All disciples of R. Gershom, they occupied themselves with the interpretation of the Talmud, both by personal instruction to their disciples and by their writings, with answering legal questions and with the explanation of the Scriptures after the haggadic fashion. A solitary exception was Menahem ben Helbo of Les Mans, who occupied himself with an exhaustive study of the Scriptures, and who sought for the simple meaning of the text, free from all whimsical misinterpretations. But this tendency was held in such contempt in France that his commentary on the Bible fell into oblivion.

The first genius which France produced and Germany reared was Solomon Izhaki, famous under the name of Rashi (1040-1105). Born in Troyes (Champagne), Rashi was nurtured at the breast of the Talmud, and in it he lived and moved and had his being. To perfect himself in his studies he attended the schools of Mayence and Worms. Like R. Akiba, he left his wife and home to acquire knowledge abroad. He tells himself under what trying circumstances he pursued his studies, "in want of bread and clothing, with the yoke of a family on my shoulders." Now and then, probably on the holidays, he visited his wife, but he always returned to the German, or, as it was then called, the Lorrainese academies. At the age of twenty-five he settled permanently in Troyes, and, his fame having spread, was probably elected rabbi of that city and its environs. However, he received no salary for this office. In the days of Pope Gregory VII, of which an unemotional historian tells with reference to the prelates of the Church: "No one can become a bishop or an abbot in the kingdom (Germany) who does not possess much money or does not indulge in vice; that priest is praised most highly who wears the most gorgeous raiments, who sets the most sumptuous table, and who has the prettiest concubines," in those days and long after, it was regarded as a disgrace and a sin in Jewish circles for a rabbi to receive any remuneration for his office. The rabbinate, in Christendom and in Islam, was regarded as a post of honor to which only the most worthy could aspire. The rabbi had to excel his community not only in learning but also in virtue. Temperance, frugality and indifference to money were qualities that were taken for granted in a rabbi. Rashi embodied these rabbinical virtues to perfection and posterity regarded him as a stainless ideal. His contemporaries re-

vered him as the highest authority. From all parts of Germany and France religious inquiries were directed to him, and his responses evince as much profound knowledge as amiability of character.

Upon the death of the "wise men of Lorraine," Rashi became their acknowledged successor, and students flocked to his school in Troyes from Germany and France where he instructed them in the Bible and in the Talmud. He was so thoroughly versed in the Talmud that nothing in it remained obscure to him; and he surpassed all his predecessors in the lucidity of his Talmudic expositions. It was justly said that without him the Babylonian Talmud would have remained as neglected and as obscure as the one of Jerusalem. His expositions on the greater part of the Talmudic tractates, known as "commentary" (Konteros) are a model of scholia—simple, laconic, lucid and illuminating. Written in the popular Talmudic idiom, there is not a word wanting or superfluous. His definition of words or elucidation of topics is intended for beginners as well as for profound scholars. Rashi understood the art of making the text clear, of entering into the soul of the reader, and of obviating misunderstandings, objections and questions by a skillfully applied expression or turn of phrase. As a commentator Rashi is an artist, and he soon supplanted the commentaries of R. Gershom and of his own Lorrainese teachers.

Rashi wrote also expositions upon most of the biblical books. In this work, however, he was not so original. It is true that his correct tact and his instinct for truth guided him often to the correct definition of words and to a proper understanding of the context; but he was too much under the influence of the haggadic method of exposition, in the assumption that the exegesis found in the Talmud and in the Haggadah was intended to be taken

seriously. Nevertheless, it dawned upon him that the simple sense of the text was inconsistent with the haggadic method of exposition. This consciousness grew stronger in him with the advance of years, and he admitted to his son-in-law, Samuel ben Meir, the necessity of rewriting his biblical commentaries in a more literal, matter-of-fact manner. At any rate, Rashi was far above his contemporary Christian biblical exegetes who believed in all seriousness that the Bible contained four different meanings: the literal, which gives the fact; the allegorical, which teaches religion—that is, which finds in every scriptural passage allusion to Jesus, His passion, and to the Church; the moral, which is to regulate conduct; and the mystic, which tells of the invisible world beyond the grave. Rashi, on the other hand, knows as yet nothing of a mystic interpretation; departs from the haggadic method now and then, and, in many cases, arrives at the correct meaning. Because of his significant services rendered Judaism as a commentator, he received the witty appellation of Parshandatha (the name of one of Haman's sons; literally, interpreter of the law). Rashi's skill as a commentator is all the more remarkable when one considers that all the significant achievements of the Spanish school were unknown to him. He knew only the rudiments of Hebrew grammar as laid down by Menahem ben Saruk and Dunash. The works of Hayyuj and Ibn Janah, because they were written in Arabic, he did not know at all. For this reason, his grammatical annotations are awkward and often obscure. Nevertheless, no commentary on the Scriptures ever gained such popularity as did "Rashi." There was a time when no biblical book appeared from the press without being accompanied by Rashi's commentary, and the two were regarded as indissolubly connected. The sacredness of the scriptural

text lent a certain sacredness to its accompanying commentary also, and that, in turn, became the subject of numerous commentaries.

The school founded by R. Gershom in Mayence was raised to a high degree of eminence by Rashi. His spirit descended upon his sons-in-law and grandsons, who formed his distinguished circle of disciples. Rashi had no sons, but he had three daughters, one of whom was so well versed in the Talmud that, during her father's illness, she read to him the Talmudic inquiries addressed to him by letter, and he dictated his answers to her. All the three daughters married learned men, and their sons likewise grew into learned men. Through Rashi and his school, Northern France (Champagne) became the home of the Talmud as Babylon had been in former days, and led Europe in this respect. The Talmudic scholars of France were sought after even in Spain, and were richly rewarded for their instructions. The leadership which Jewish Spain inherited from Babylonia, she had to share with France since Rashi's time. While the former remained the classic land of Hebrew poetry, philology, critical exegesis of the Scriptures, and philosophy, she had to yield to the latter the palm of Talmudic scholarship.

The Jews of Italy, on the other hand, contributed nothing of importance to either branch. Their Talmudic teachers they imported from abroad. The only Italian of this time who gained a name in Jewish literature was Nathan ben Yehiel of Rome, the author of a Talmudic lexicon under the title of "Aruch" (about 1001-2). This lexicon is more complete than the former attempts, but evinces little originality. It is a compilation from older works.

The Jews of Eastern Europe gradually emerged from the obscurity that covered them. In the tenth

century, it is certain, they were settled in Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland. The community of Prague does, indeed, claim to be the oldest in Europe, and seeks to prove its great antiquity by means of a tombstone supposedly ante-dating Christianity by a century. However, because it proves too much it proves nothing. It is certain that Jews lived in Bohemia in the tenth century and possessed Christian slaves—a fact that greatly disturbed the equanimity of the apostle to the Prussians, the former archbishop of Prague, Woytech Adalbert (before 990). The Jews of Vysehrad, a suburb of Prague, were supposed to be so rich that a certain Moravian princess, writing to her greedy brother-in-law who was her enemy, said: "Rich men such as you seek among us you can find in the midst of your own land. In the suburb of Prague, in the village of Vysehrad, there are Jews whose houses are full of silver and gold. Help yourself." In the eleventh century there were Jews in Moravia also. One of them, named Podiva, erected a castle to which he gave his name (near Lundenburg, on the border of Moravia and Austria, before 1067). In the newly founded kingdom of Poland, and particularly in the then capital of Gnesen, the Jews possessed Christian slaves without restraint, though the rulers were Christians.

The Jews of Eastern Europe had no share in the culture of their brethren of the West. Even the Talmud was unknown to them; and not until a century later is any mention made, and that scantily, of Talmudic scholars from Bohemia, Poland and Russia. It is even impossible to decide whether the Jews who originally settled in Eastern Europe emigrated from the West or from Southern Russia, or whether they were originally Karaites or Rabbinites.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST CRUSADE; THE JEWS UNDER THE ALMORAVIDES; JUDAH HALEVI

(1096-1148)

Toward the end of the eleventh century there occurred the first assault in the struggle between Christianity and Islam outside of Spain which changed the course of history and added a blood-stained page to the annals of the Jewish people. Peter of Amiens' lamentations over the mistreatment of the pilgrims to Jerusalem found a thousandfold echo in the Council of Clermont, and aroused the piety, the romantic knighthood, the ambition, the greed and a multitude of other noble and sordid passions of Christendom into a crusade. A period rich in martyrs ensued; the greatest martyrdom, however, fell to the lot of the Jews of Germany, who sealed with their blood their covenant with the God of Israel.

Before the crusades, the Jews of Germany were allowed to live undisturbed; they were not excluded from holding real property, and were still less despised and held in contempt as some apologetic historians claim. When Bishop Rüdiger Huozmann of Speyer added the hamlet of Old-Speyer to the

city (1084), he decided to provide therein dwelling places for the Jews, and to confer privileges upon them as the best way of enhancing the reputation of the city. In addition to freedom of commerce, they were given the right to possess landed property, buildings, gardens and vineyards in New Speyer. Bishop Rüdiger further granted the Jews of Speyer an independent jurisdiction and their synagog officials or rabbis (archisynagogus) were to enjoy the same authority in judicial matters as the burgomaster. They were allowed to own slaves and to hire Christian nurses and servants despite the canonical law and the wishes of Gregory VII. Nevertheless, to guard them against any annoyances on the part of the rabble, Rüdiger assigned to them an exclusive district which they were at liberty to fortify and defend. These privileges, for which they had to pay three and a half pounds of gold annually, were secured to them for all time by a document in which Rüdiger adds that he conceded to the Jews more favorable laws than they enjoyed in any other German city. The emperor Henry IV confirmed these privileges, and added still more favorable provisions.

This emperor who, despite his fickleness and vacillation, was never unjust, was, on the whole, friendly to the Jews. The Jews of Worms, like the other inhabitants of that city, received favorable privileges from him. When the emperor, in the course of his quarrel with Pope Gregory VII, was forsaken by all the princes and the clergy and was treated like an outcast, the city of Worms remained loyal to him, and the Jews, like the Christians of that city, flew to arms in defense of their emperor. In appreciation of their loyalty, the Jews of the imperial cities were exempted from the payment of duties (1077). Several years later (Feb. 6, 1095), he issued an imperial diploma that was extraordi-

narily favorable to the Jews: Jews or their slaves were not to be forced to accept Christianity under fine of twelve pounds of gold. In a trial between a Jew and a Christian, the oath should be administered in accordance with Jewish custom; Jews were to be exempt from the ordeals of fire or water. And soon after the issuance of this favorable decree they were to be butchered by the consecrated warriors of a holy war! The Jews of France and Germany were just then filled with Messianic hopes. A mystic had calculated that the Son of David would make his appearance toward the end of the two hundred and fifty-sixth lunar cycle (between the years 1096-1104), and would lead the scattered sons of Judah to the Holy Land. But, instead of the trumpet of the Messianic redemption, they heard the savage cry of the pilgrims: "The Jews have crucified our Savior; they must therefore either embrace Him or die."

The first bands of the crusaders, the one led by the enthusiastic and pious Peter of Amiens and his eight knights, the other by the presbyter of Gottschalk, inflicted no particular harm upon the Jews as such; they plundered Jews and Christians alike. But the succeeding swarms, composed of the riff-raff of France, England, Lorraine, and Flanders, began the holy work of murder and of plunder with Jews in default of the Mohammedans. It was a shameless mob, a promiscuous rabble of men and women who abandoned themselves to the most vicious excesses. But these vicious palmers were consecrated warriors; their sins, both past and future, were forgiven. A monk suggested to this gang the idea of driving the Jews by force into the bosom of the Church; a written message, supposedly found on the grave of Jesus, made this work the duty of all true Christians. This idea appeared to the wild crusaders as advantageous, as comprehen-

PETER OF AMIENS PREACHING THE CRUSADE

sible and pleasing to God. Are not the Jews as unbelieving as the Saracens, both arch-enemies of Christianity? The crusade could start at once if a beginning is to be made with the Jews! As soon as the bands assembled in France and in Germany, they were marked by the cross on their shoulders and by the shedding of Jewish blood. But though France was the first place of assembly for the crusaders, the massacres in that country were only spasmodic; but the terror of the communities was so great that they sent messengers to near and distant communities, including those of Germany, to urge upon them to assemble in the synagogs, and, by fasting and penitence, to supplicate the help of God to avert the approaching danger. In Germany all was quiet as yet; the Jews of the Rhine region had as yet no suspicion of the tragic fate awaiting them, but they nevertheless assembled in their synagogs, at the request of the leaders of the Mayence community, in fervent prayer in behalf of their endangered brethren of France. The latter, however, escaped with the mere fright, because the princes and the clergy took energetic masures for their protection. Only in Rouen that belonged to England did the crusaders drive the Jews into the Church, and, at the point of the sword, gave them the choice between death and baptism.

In Germany, however, the persecutions assumed a particularly tragic character. The band that rolled into Germany from France and Flanders was led by a French knight called William the Carpenter, who, even before his departure, had to resort to the plunder of the peasants in order to obtain the gold requisite for the equipment of his train. The spirit that animated William's pilgrims is characterized by their selection of a goose and a few goats as their guides, firmly believing that these were inspired by God and would point out to them the road

to Jerusalem. It was to such enemies that the defenceless Jewish communities of the Moselle and of the Rhine were abandoned. The emperor Henry was then entangled in Italy, and in Germany anarchy reigned supreme.

The mere news of the approach of the crusaders spread such consternation in the community of Treves that several Jews stabbed their children and themselves with knives, and women and girls loaded themselves with stones and jumped into the Moselle to escape baptism or dishonor. The rest of the community pleaded with Bishop Egilbert for protection. But this hard-hearted bishop who possibly wished to clear himself from a suspicion of heresy by a zeal for proselytizing, replied: "Embrace Christ, and I give you peace and the quiet enjoyment of your possessions; but if you remain obdurate, your souls perish together with your bodies." The Jews held a consultation and decided, at the advice of one of their learned members, Micha (Michaeas) to feign conversion. Thereupon Micha addressed the bishop: "Tell us quickly what we are expected to believe, and protect us from the enemy that lurks at the gate to destroy us." The bishop at once drawled the Catholic confession; the Jews mechanically repeated it and submitted to baptism.

The band of crusaders then rolled on to Speyer, the community of which had recently been guaranteed inviolability and freedom both by the bishop and by the emperor. In the first assault ten Jews were dragged to a church to receive baptism under threats of death. More steadfast than their coreligionists of Treves, these men declined to submit to baptism, and were slain (May 3, 1096). The other Jews of Speyer had fled meanwhile to the palace of Bishop Johannsen, and to the emperor's castle. This bishop, more humane than Egilbert, who abhorred proselytizing by means of hangmen, em-

ployed force against the raging mob; and the Jews themselves defended their lives desperately. These energetic measures saved the community of Speyer. Johannsen even seized some of the pilgrims and ordered their execution, for which, of course, he is censured by the monkish chronicles. A rumor was circulated that the bishop was bribed by the Jews. As a matter of fact, it is not at all surprising that the Jews conceived an absolute abhorrence for Christianity, and not only resisted baptism but regarded themselves as contaminated by the mere contact with baptismal water sprinkled upon them in a condition of stupor and unconsciousness. In the Christianity of the eleventh century they could see only a wretched idolatry. The veneration of relics and of images, the conduct of the supreme head of the Church who absolved the nations from their sacred oath and urged upon them the murder of an emperor, the lascivious life of the clergy, and the brutal behavior of the crusaders—all this suggested to the Jews the idolatry condemned in the Scriptures rather than a faith based upon the belief in one God. The German Jews looked upon the Christianity of their time as their forefathers, in the days of the Maccabees, looked upon the cult of Zeus.

The swarm that attacked the community of Speyer was evidently not numerous enough and could therefore be repulsed. The mob, however, awaited reinforcements; and, fourteen days later, a still larger and ever-increasing number of pilgrims —"wolves of the wilderness," as the Jewish chronicler calls them—marched upon Worms. Bishop Allebrandus of that city could not or would not give the Jews adequate protection, though the fact that he harbored in his palace a part of the community, probably the most prominent and wealthiest, would indicate that he did not sanction the massacre of the Jews. The majority of the Jews, left to their own

resources, at first defended themselves, but soon succumbed to superior numbers, and died with the "Shema" on their lips. Only a few submitted to baptism. Many committed suicide; women slew their children with their own hands. The pilgrims destroyed the houses of the Jews, plundered their property and vented their blind fury also upon the books they found in the synagogs and in the houses (May 18). Seven days later, the Jews who had found protection in the bishop's palace suffered martyrdom in their turn. The bishop notified them suddenly that he could no longer harbor them unless they accepted baptism. The Jews asked for a few days' respite to consider the matter. In front of the palace the pilgrims were assembled, prepared to lead the Jews to the church or to death. But when the respite expired, and the bishop threw the gates open to the mob, all the Jews were found swimming in blood. They had preferred to fall by each other's hand. Upon learning the news, the raging mob fell upon those who were still alive, murdered them, and dragged their corpses into the streets. Only a few saved their lives by feigning acceptance of Christianity (Sunday, May 25). One youth, Simha Cohen, who had lost his father and seven brothers through the crusaders, determined not to die unavenged. He was taken to the church, and in the moment he was to receive the sacrament, he drew a knife which he kept hidden in his sleeve, and stabbed a nephew of the bishop. He was torn limb from limb in the church, as was to be expected. Only after the crusaders left the city could the Jewish martyrs be interred. The grave-diggers counted eighteen hundred corpses.

The day following the second massacre in Worms the crusaders arrived in Mayence. Here the mob was led by Count Emmerich or Emicho of Leiningen, a near kinsman to the Archbishop Ruthard, a blood-

thirsty man. Greedy for the wealth of the Jews as much as for their blood, it seems that he and the archbishop, an arch-enemy of Henry IV, concerted a devilish scheme with that object in view. The archbishop invited all the Jews to place themselves under his protection until the storm passed. Thirteen hundred Jews took advantage of this invitation, committed their wealth to the bishop's charge, and hid in the court and in the garrets of the extensive palace. But at dawn of the very next day (Tuesday, May 27) Emmerich led the crusaders before the episcopal residence and, amidst savage cries, demanded the surrender of the Jews. The archbishop's troops, posted at the gates for the protection of the Jews, refused to turn their weapons against Christians and pilgrims. The crusaders broke down the palace gates easily, and scattered through the chambers in search of their victims. The horrible scenes of Worms were repeated here. With the "Shema" on their lips, men, women and children perished by the sword of their brothers or of the enemy. The corpses of thirteen hundred martyrs were conveyed on wagons outside of the city from the palace. The archbishop retained the Jewish wealth and divided it with Emmerich. Sixty Jews, probably the wealthiest, who were hidden by Ruthard in the cathedral, and later on conveyed by him to a village (Rheingau) remote from the highway, were also seized and slaughtered. Two men and two girls—Uriah, Isaac and the latter's two daughters who, in the midst of the excitement or out of weakness, had submitted to baptism —were driven by their remorse to a horrible deed. Two days later Isaac slaughtered his daughters in his house, and set his home on fire. Thereupon, he and Uriah repaired to the synagog, set it on fire likewise, and threw themselves into the flames.

This fire started a conflagration that reduced a large part of Mayence to ashes.

A depraved mob of crusaders under Hermann the Carpenter gathered meanwhile about Cologne on the eve of the Feast of Weeks. The most ancient community of Germany was prepared for the worst, but the sympathy of the bishop and of the citizens of Cologne was stirred by the Jewish pleas for protection, and they secreted the Jews in their own houses. When the raving mobs broke into the Jewish houses the following day at dawn, they found them deserted, and could vent their fury only on stone, wood and the parchment scrolls of the Pentateuch which they trampled under foot. An earthquake that was felt on that day instead of frightening the delirious, bloody mob, increased their fury inasmuch as they regarded it as an expression of divine approval. The noble Bishop Hermann III, whose name deserves the veneration of posterity, had the Jews secretly removed from Cologne and conveyed for greater security to cities and villages that belonged to him, in Neus and other places, where they spent three anxious weeks (June 3-24) in praying and fasting. On St. John's Day (June 24), the crusaders were inspired to new murders by the sacrament of the mass, and slaughtered on the same day all Jews who had found refuge in Neus. The pilgrims soon discovered the hiding places of the other Cologne Jews also, sought them out in their retreats, and murdered the Jewish fugitives. Many of them committed suicide in rivers and swamps. One old and learned man, Samuel ben Yehiel, set the example. He slaughtered his only son, a handsome youth, in the river, pronounced a benediction over his act to which the victim responded an "Amen," while those who stood by joined in "Hear, O Israel," and plunged into the water. Altogether twelve thousand Jews are said

to have been killed in the cities of the Rhine in the course of two months (May to July). The rest feigned Christianity in the anticipation that the just emperor upon his return from Italy would listen to their grievances.

In every Jewish community through which the pilgrims passed the same tragic scenes were repeated. The Jews of Bohemia appear on the scene of history for the first time through the incidents connected with the crusade. Hitherto they did not feel the yoke of oppression because Christianity had not yet become a power in the Slavic counries. Some of them were well-to-do, and engaged in slave traffic which consisted mostly of Slavs (Slavonians, whence the term slaves) whom they bought at first hand and sold in Western Europe and Spain. This traffic brought them in conflict with the clergy, and Bishop Adalbert of Prague denounced them vigorously. Then came the crusades and transplanted the poisoned seeds of fanaticism in Bohemia also. When the crusaders passed through Bohemia, the powerful Duke Wratislaw II was engaged in a foreign war, and there was none to check the mob in its work of murder. The crusaders, accordingly, dragged the Jews of Prague to baptism, and murdered those who resisted. Bishop Cosmas preached in vain against such acts of violence. The crusaders understood their Christianity better than the prelate.

Fortunately for the Jews of Western Europe and particularly of Germany, and for the honor of mankind, this greed for blood was confined to the scum of the nation. The princes and the citizens, on the other hand, abhorred those deeds of violence, and even the higher clergy, with the exception of Archbishop Ruthard of Mayence and Egilbert of Treves, stood on the side of the Jews. The time had not yet come when all the three powers—princes, people,

and clergy—were a unit in the persecution of Jews. When the news arrived that the two hundred thousand pilgrims under Emmerich and Hermann met a miserable end for the most part, most of them slain by the Hungarians, and that the leaders, with the small tattered remnant, returned to Germany covered with disgrace, Christians and Jews alike regarded this catastrophe as a just divine judgment. The emperor Henry IV had meanwhile returned from Italy, expressed his abhorrence of the excesses of the crusaders, and upon the application of Moses ben Ghutiel (Jekuthiel), the head of the Speyer community, permitted the Jews who had been baptised by force to return to the faith of their fathers. This was joyous news for the Jews of Germany, and the baptised discarded the mask of Christianity at once (1097). The representatives of the Church were by no means satisfied with this imperial decree, and even Pope Clemens III, who owed his elevation to the emperor, protested against "the profanation of the sacraments of the Church by the Jews." The emperor, however, ignored this unholy zeal of the clergy, and furthermore, upon the complaint of the Jews, instituted proceedings against the kinsman of the Archbishop Ruthard of Mayence on account of the robbery of the property of the Jewish community. As a result, the emperor confiscated the revenues of the archbishopric (1098). Ruthard retaliated by joining the conspiracy against the emperor.

The Jews of Bohemia, however, fared badly in this year. Upon the news that the emperor had granted permission to return to Judaism, they, too, quickly dropped the mask of Christianity, but feared to remain in the country where they could find no justice. Accordingly, they gathered their belongings together with the intention of removing them to a place of safety in Poland or Panonia

March of the Crusaders

(Austria and Hungary) and of emigrating there later on. But the Bohemian duke Wratislaw who had just then returned from the wars and learned of the intention of the Jews to remove their wealth abroad, ordered his soldiery to occupy the Jewish houses at once, and sent word to the elders of the community that he regarded their possessions as his personal property, and their scheme of removing them as a robbery about to be committed against him. "Of the Jerusalem treasures ye have brought nothing to Bohemia. . . . Naked ye came into the country, naked ye may depart. As to your apostasy I leave that to Bishop Cosmas." Against such logic, the logic of brutal force, arguments are superfluous. Accordingly, the Jews of Bohemia were stripped from head to foot, and all that was left them was a few pence for their momentary needs. A contemporaneous bishop tells in his chronicle with evident satisfaction that the duke took much more gold from the Jews on that occasion than the Greeks from the Trojans upon the conquest of Troy.

The Jews of Jerusalem also met with a tragic fate. When the army of crusaders under Godfrey of Bouillon took the Holy City by storm, after many hardships, and instituted a massacre among the Mohammedans, they drove the Jews, Karaites and Rabbinites into a synagog, set fire to it, and all the Jews perished (July 15, 1099). The eleventh century expired in the midst of Jewish blood. The emperor Henry, however, was fully determined to protect the Jews of his empire. During his presence at Mayence, with the scene of the atrocious murders before him, he made the princes and the citizens take a solemn oath not to disturb and maltreat the Jews (1103). But the protection which the emperor granted the Jews, of great advantage for the moment, proved detrimental in the long run. This imperial protection deprived the Jews of Ger-

many of their citizenship and rendered them the personal property, the bondsmen, of the emperor.

This circumstance, however, was not the only evil result of the crusades experienced by the Jews of Germany. Those Jews who had accepted baptism under compulsion and afterward returned to Judaism were, on the one hand, claimed as Christians by Pope Clemens III, and, on the other hand, repelled as apostates by their coreligionists who had remained loyal. These unfortunates thus were treated with suspicion and contempt by both sides. Rashi protested vigorously against this suspicious, narrow attitude on the part of the Jews who had remained loyal: "Far be it from us," he said, "to keep aloof from those who had returned to the fold and to put them to shame. What they did was done out of fear of the sword, and as soon as the danger passed they hastened to return to Judaism." The consequences to the first crusade upon the intellectual development of the German Jews were even more detrimental. The natural tendency of the German Jews toward exaggerated penitential piety was heightened to the point of gloom by their unparalleled sufferings. From the Catholic Church, which they could not sufficiently detest, they borrowed nevertheless the custom of visiting the graves of their martyrs whom they, likewise, called saints (Kedoshim), and of addressing prayers to the dead and pleading for their intercession. Since that time Judaism in Germany became more and more torpid, and assumed a mournful aspect.

This extreme tendency on the part of the German Jews was, however, counteracted by the Talmud. The study of the Talmud, as developed by Rashi, guarded against mustiness, thoughtless broodings, and inane monkish visions. Whoever would find his way in the Talmudic labyrinth must have his eyes open to the world of facts, must not permit his

intellect to become rusty. The profound Talmudic studies were the balm for the wounds inflicted upon the communities of the Rhine region by the crusading mobs. Within the Talmudic schools there reigned the joyousness of intellectual creativeness; here all care and all sorrow were banished. The school thus became the universe for the unfortunate. The two men who gave breadth and depth to the study of the Talmud died at the beginning of the twelfth century: Isaac Alfasi in 1103, and Rashi two years later (1105) while engaged in his great Talmudic commentary. Both left numerous disciples who continued their studies in the spirit of their masters. Both were revered by their contemporaries as well as by posterity. The admiration of the Spaniards for Alfasi found expression, in conformity with their high degree of culture, in artistic, well-rounded poetic lines; that of the Jews of Germany and of Northern France for Rashi, in accordance with their lower scale of culture, in exaggerated legends.

The Jews of Spain, and even those of Andalusia, could still regard this land of beauty and of culture as their beloved home. Even under the barbaric Almoravides, who had become the masters of the south, they lived in peaceful security. Under the second Almoravidian ruler Ali (1106-1143), Jews were entrusted with the collection of the poll-tax from the Jewish and Christian populations, and some of the more distinguished among them were appointed to positions of honor in his court. Under him too science and poetry were the stepping-stones to high preferment. A Jewish physician and poet, Abu-Ayyub Solomon ibn Al-Mu̯allem, was his court physician and bore the title of prince and vizier. Another Jewish physician, Abraham ibn Meir ibn Kamnial of Saragossa occupied a position of eminence at court, and likewise bore the title of vizier.

The greatest poets of his time glorified him in lofty strains for his nobility of character, generosity, and sympathy with his coreligionists of other countries: "He walks upon the earth while he aims at the stars; he lives in Spain, but his love reaches out to Babylon and to Egypt." Another Jewish prince whom the contemporary poets extolled was Solomon ibn Farusal, who was probably in the service of a Christian prince and was entrusted with a mission to the court of Murcia. Shortly before the battle of Ucles where the Mohammedans won another decisive victory over the Christians, Ibn Farusal was murdered. The young poet, Judah Halevi, was engaged in writing an enthusiastic poem of laudation with which to greet him upon his return from his important mission when the news of his murder arrived. Thereupon, the poet transformed the jubilee song into an ingenious elegy. The astronomer Abraham bar Hiyya (1065-1136) was a sort of minister of police of one of the Mohammedan rulers, and also bore the title of "prince." He was greatly esteemed by the princes on account of his knowledge of astronomy, held a disputation with learned Christian ecclesiastics, and proved to them the correctness of the Jewish calendar.

Although the Pyrenean Peninsula at this period possessed a number of influential men who were generous promoters of knowledge, none of them formed a pivotal point, like Hasdai ibn Shaprut and Samuel ibn Nagdela, for the awakening of dormant forces and for giving direction to literary activity. In fact, this period needed such men no longer. The emulation in all branches of human and divine knowledge was so great that it needed no longer to be stimulated from above, by an eminent personality. The first half of the twelfth century produced in Jewish circles a veritable cornucopia of eminent men—poets, philosophers, ingenious Talmudists—

whose productions, in nearly all cases, bear the stamp of perfection. The petty jealousy of which Menahem ben Saruk and Ibn Gabirol had occasion to complain, the feelings of hostility that prevailed between Ibn Janah and Samuel ibn Nagdela, between Alfasi and Ibn Abalia, were banished from the circle of the cultural leaders of this period. Poets sang in one another's honor, and sincerely praised the men who pursued other departments of knowledge. Each participated in the joys as well as in the sorrows of the other, and all looked upon one another as members of one family. The unity of spirit that prevailed at this period among the representatives of Jewish science and poetry bears conclusive testimony to their nobility of mind.

The most eminent rabbi of this period was Joseph ibn Migas (1077-1141), a grandson of a man who stood high in the court of the Abbadides in Seville, and a son of a learned and prominent father. At the age of twelve he came from Seville to Alfasi's academy at Lucena where he remained fourteen years. Ordained at twenty-six by Alfasi, who was very proud of his disciple, that great authority recommended Ibn Migas as his successor, and, after some opposition, Ibn Migas was elected rabbi of Lucena (1103). Judah Halevi bestows upon him unstinted praise for the greatness of his soul and the nobility of his character—praise he richly deserved. In his school he followed the method of his teacher Alfasi in the study of the Talmud, and his commentary on many tractates was written in the spirit of his master. His fame as a Talmudist spread far and wide; religious inquiries were addressed to him from all sides, and his replies were profound, lucid and logical. Though generally modest and gentle, he could also be extremely severe when the occasion demanded it. Spain was then in a state of anarchy. In Andalusia the Arabs

and the Berbers were waging continuous war against one another, now openly, now secretly. In Granada, the Christians (Mozarabi) formed secret conspiracies against their Mohammedan rulers to deliver the country into the hands of Alfonso, the conqueror of Saragossa. Christian Spain was no less split. The unhappy marriage of Alfonso of Aragon and Urraca, Queen of Castile, the daughter of Alfonso VI, resulted in a still greater separation of those countries. One party sided with the king, another with the queen, and a third with the crown-prince whose partisans urged on him to rise both against his mother and his step-father. Christians and Mohammedans were often seen fighting under one flag; now against a Christian prince, now against a Mohammedan emir. Alliances and the violation thereof followed in quick succession. Duplicity and treachery were of daily occurrence. The Jews of Spain did not, of course, remain unaffected by this condition of anarchy; voluntarily or under compulsion some embraced the one party or another as their interests or political inclination dictated. But while Christians or Mohammedans who were involved in conspiracies could flee for protection to their powerful coreligionists in case of treachery, the Jews could find no such protection except in their own midst in a strong, mutual union of their own. Treachery in their own midst was all the more reprehensible, since the anger of an offended prince often fell not merely upon the conspirators, or the community, but upon the entire Jewry of the country. For this reason, when it was discovered in Lucena that a traitor from that community was about to betray his coreligionists, the rabbi and judge Joseph ibn Migas visited an exemplary punishment upon him, and had him stoned to death at dusk on the Day of Atonement. Joseph ibn Migas left a scholarly son, Meir, and numerous disciples,

among whom was Maimun of Cordova, whose son was destined to form a turning point in Jewish history.

In proportion as the study of the Talmud advanced in Spain that of biblical exegesis and of Hebrew grammar declined. These branches were neglected. But this period was all the richer in poets. In the course of the two centuries since Ben Labrat, the Hebrew language had become so flexible and supple that but little art was required to utilize it for purposes of metrical versification. The many new metrical forms with which Ibn Gabirol enriched Hebrew poetry found more or less successful imitation. The fashion the Arabs indulged in of versifying the contents of their letters to friends, a fashion the Spanish Jews adopted, made the art of poetry a necessity. Whoever wished not to appear uncultured had to learn to rime. The number of poems produced at this period is large, though but few contain true poetry. To the noteworthy poets who were more than rhymesters belong Moses ibn Ezra, Judah ibn Ghayyat, Judah ibn Abbas and Solomon ibn Zakbel.

While most of the poets of this period dedicated their muse to serious themes, Solomon ibn Zakbel, a kinsman of Rabbi Joseph ibn Sahal of Cordova, ventured to employ the Hebrew language for the dalliance of love. The new form of poetry, introduced by the Arabic poet Hariri of Bazra, whose fame had spread to Spain, inspired Ibn Zakbel to attempt something similar in Hebrew, and, under the title of Tahkemoni, he wrote a sort of satirical romance the hero of which experiences vicissitudes and disappointments. The hero himself recounts his adventures in rimed prose, interspersed with verses. He had formerly spent a long time in the solitude of a forest, in the company of his sweetheart, when he tired of this monotony and deter-

mined to seek the society of jolly companions. Decoyed by an unknown, seductive beauty through an enigmatic missive, he began to search for her, consumed by his love, and was led into a harem whose lord threatened him with death. This role of lord was only a disguise assumed by a beauty to scare him, and this beauty who was not the object of his love but her servant promised to grant his desires. At last he seemed to be near his goal; he was led in the presence of his beloved; but this only turned out to be a trick played on him by one of his friends. Thus the hero is led from one disappointment to another. This romance has little poetic value, and is a mere imitation of its Arabic model. The only thing admirable in this work is the facility with which Ibn Zakbel handles the Hebrew language and applies the originally serious phrases to frivolous trivialities.

Highly gifted men were the four brothers Ibn Ezra of Granada, Abu Ihrahim Isaac, the eldest, Abu Harun Moses, Abulhassan Judah, and Abu Hajjaj, the youngest, whose father occupied a high office under King Habus or rather under Samuel Ibn Nagdela. "One recognizes by the nobility of these four princely Ibn Ezras," says a contemporaneous historian, "that the blood of David flowed in their veins, and that they descended from the ancient aristocracy." The most distinguished of the four was Abu Harun Moses (about 1070-1139), the most prolific poet of this period, whose muse it seems was awakened by misfortune. He was in love with his niece, the daughter of his oldest brother Isaac, and was loved in return. The brother, however, refused him his daughter's hand, and the younger brothers, it seems, approved the decision of the oldest. Filled with anger against his brothers, he fled his father's house, and wandered about in Portugal and Castile, consumed by

his unrequited love. Even time could not heal his wounds; the muse alone was his comfort. He sought to assuage his grief by absorbing himself in serious studies also, and he acquired friends and admirers who remained loyal to him unto death. The noble Ibn Kamnial was one of these.

Moses Ibn Ezra bears much resemblance to Solomon ibn Gabirol. Like the former, he complains of treachery and jealousy, of the hardness and the faithlessness of the time. His poems reflect as much egotism; and his poetic inspiration has no loftier motive. But Ibn Ezra was not so delicately sensitive; his nature was hardier; for this reason he is not always so dejected and morose, but can sing cheerful songs at times and trifle with his muse occasionally. As a poet, however, he is far inferior to Ibn Gabirol. His poetry is artificial and cumbrous, his imagery is overdrawn, and his verses are often harsh and bombastic, lacking euphony and symmetry. At the same time one cannot help admiring his mastery of the Hebrew, the copiousness of his poetic productions, and the wealth of metrical forms with which he enriched Hebrew poetry. One collection of his poems which he called "A String of Pearls" (Anak or Tarshish), containing twelve hundred and ten verses, in ten divisions, was dedicated to Ibn Kamnial, and in it the poet sings of wine, love and joy, lauds the life of luxury amidst bowers and the singing of birds, complains of separation from friends and of faithlessness; laments over the approach of old age, points also occasionally to divine salvation, and glorifies the art of poesy. In addition to this collection, Ibn Ezra composed three hundred occasional poems exceeding ten thousand verses, and also nearly two hundred liturgical compositions for the New Year and the Day of Atonement, which form an esential element of the religious service of many communities.

However, only few of his religious poems are genuinely poetic and inspiring. All of them were written in accordance with the rules of the poetic art; but the poetic fragrance is absent. In the technique of poetry Moses ibn Ezra surpassed all his contemporaries. He wrote a treatise in Arabic on rhetoric and the art of poetry which is at once also a sort of literary history and review of Spanish Jewish poetry from its very beginning. The least important of Ibn Ezra's works was his attempt to write a would-be philosophic treatise in Hebrew in which he set forth the sterile philosophy of his day after Arabic models.

Despite his insignificance as a philosopher and his mediocrity as a poet, Moses ibn Ezra was highly esteemed by his contemporaries because of the facility with which he wrote. He was on friendly terms with all prominent men who praised him in prose and verse and whom he praised in return.

The glory of this period was Al-Hasan Judah ben Samuel Halevi of Old Castile (born about 1086) who, as a poet, excelled all his contemporaries and predecessors in the witchery of his muse and, as a thinker, belonged to the chosen few who set in motion new and suggestive currents of thought. Judah Halevi was one of the elect; to designate him as "the image of God" would be neither a lie nor an exaggeration. He was a full, well-rounded personality; a perfect poet, an original thinker, a worthy son of Judaism whom by song and thought he transfigured and idealized. If Spain were ever to conquer her prejudices, and were to measure her geniuses no longer by an ecclesiastic standard, she would assign a place of honor in her Pantheon to Judah Halevi. The Jewish people have long ago conferred upon him the laurel crown of poetry and the prize of inward

piety and spotless morality. Another Jewish poetic genius (Heine) sang of him:

"All pure and true, without a stain,
Such was his song, such was his soul,
When by the hands of God was shaped
This soul He, self-complacent, stamped
Upon this beautiful soul a kiss,
And every song the poet sang
Thrills with the echo of that kiss,
Made sacred by that gift divine."

Born in Christian Spain where Talmudic authorities were scarce, Judah Halevi attended Alfasi's academy at Lucena. Like Ibn Gabirol, he began to sing in early youth, but, unlike that poet, he sang the joys of life and not its sorrows. Fortune smiled upon this darling of the muse from his youth, and no shrill discord escaped his poetic soul. In Southern Spain he made the acquaintance of the Ibn Ezra family of Granada; and when he learned of Moses Ibn Ezra's tragic experiences the young poet comforted the older one in lines breathing such tenderness and sympathy that the latter was overcome by their beauty. Like Ibn Ezra, Judah Halevi was not a stranger to the passion of love; he celebrated in song the gazelle eyes of his beloved, her rosy lips, and her raven hair. The Southern skies are reflected in his muses, and the green grass and the blue streams. His youthful poetry betrays a mastery of verse, a rich imagination, fine symmetry, and is aglow with the fire and charm of youth.

But Judah Halevi was not alone a master of the Hebrew language and of the metric forms of the neo-Hebraic poetry, but was also a deep student of the natural sciences, philosophy and medicine. He wrote Arabic gracefully, and was familiar with the

new poetry of Castile. He derived his livelihood from the practice of medicine, and was much sought after as a physician in Toledo. He was, however, restive under the restraints this profession put upon him, and longed for an opportunity "to go to a place of living waters, to the fountains of wisdom." Medicine was too prosaic an occupation for him. All the forces of his creative spirit were consecrated to poetry and to the study of Judaism.

Judah Halevi had a more correct conception of poetry than his Arabic and Jewish contemporaries. Poetry, to him, was something sacred and of divine origin; the poetic impulse must be something original, innate, and not an art that may be learned. He ridiculed those who lay down rules for metre and rime. The true, born poet is a law unto himself. As long as he was young, Judah Halevi squandered the gold of his rich poetry on tinsel and glorified his numerous friends in occasional poems, composed enigmas, and sang of wine and of joy. When his friends censured him for his wine songs, he replied:

"I am a youth of hardly twenty-four,
And shall I know the joys of wine no more?"

Occasionally he chose complicated meters on purpose in order to show his mastery of every metric structure; he often employs an Arabic or Castilian verse at the conclusion of a poem. In each word and turn the great master is recognized who has the power to draw a finished picture with a few bold strokes. His descriptions of nature can be favorably compared with the best products of poetry in any language. One can see in his lines the flowers bud and glisten; one inhales their fragrance; one sees the branches bending beneath the

weight of golden fruits, and hears the songsters of the air warble their love songs. With the hand of a master he paints the sunshine and the gentle breeze. When he describes the fury of a storm-tossed sea, he imparts to his readers all the sublimity and the terror which he himself felt. All this, however, does not reflect his real soul; it was, in a measure, the tribute he had to pay to his generation and to the fashion of the times. Even his religious poetry, in which he was no less fertile than Moses ibn Ezra, having written three hundred compositions, and which surpasses in depth, fervor and beauty of form the work of all his predecessors, even this does not reveal the real genius of the poet. Judah Halevi's significance as a poet is seen in his national-religious productions. Here, where he draws upon the very depths of his poetic soul, where his whole being is aglow with enthusiasm, where he sings of Zion and of her pristine and future glories, where he covers his head in sorrow over her present servitude; here his fancy becomes truth, here nothing is artificial, nothing make-believe; all is deep feeling. His Zionides (songs of Zion) bring to mind the Psalms of David. When he pours forth his grief at Zion's widowhood, when he dreams of Zion's future glory when she should be reunited with God and with her children, one believes he hears the Korahides. Judah Halevi's mature muse was inspired by a great aim: to sing of Israel, his God and his sanctuaries, his past and future, his glorious destiny, and to lament his lowliness. He was a national poet. For this reason, his poems draw every reader with an irresistible power, and more so than Ibn Gabirol's plaints of his individual forlornness and Moses ibn Ezra's love-stricken sorrow.

His nationalistic poetry was the offspring not of a poetic mood, but of deep convictions. Feeling

and thought flowed as one in his soul. Poetry and philosophy were inseparably linked in his nature, and both as his very own. Just as he gave expression to the national feelings of Israel in his Zionides, so he interpreted, if one may say so, the national thoughts of Judaism by presenting original views of the relation of God to the world, of man to his Creator, and of the significance of Judaism in contradistinction to Christianity and Islam. All these vitally significant questions he solves in a manner vivid, fervent, overwhelming. If, as a poet, he resembles the psalmist, as a religious philosopher he resembles the author of the Book of Job, but is more pregnant and comprehensive. Borrowing the dialogue form from the Book of Job or from Plato for his system of religious philosophy, he linked it also with an historic event—a form that greatly heightens one's interest in the subject-matter and makes the impression more lasting. Asked by his disciples to promulgate the principles of rabbinic Judaism and to refute the objections raised against it by philosophy, Christianity, Islam and Karaism, he replied with a suggestive treatise in dialogue form, written in an elegant Arabic. This work was to prove the truths of Judaism and to vindicate the much-maligned Jewish religion. A pagan who knew nothing of philosophy or of the three existing religions but who felt the need of an inward, naive communion with God is made to be convinced of the truths of Judaism. This pagan is Bulan, king of the Chazars, who had accepted Judaism, and him the philosopher of Castile selected as his historic point of departure. For this reason, this work received the name of Chozari. The scheme of the work follows:

The king of Chazars, an idolator with truly religious inclinations, repeatedly saw an angel in his dreams who told him: "Thy intentions are

good, but thy practices are objectionable." To arrive with certainty at the true worship of God, the king consulted a philosopher. This man of wisdom half Aristotelian, half neo-Platonist, explained to the king that the divinity was too transcendent to bear any relation whatever to man or to require worship from him, and that human perfection may be attained through the intellect without the help of religion. But his philosophic abstractions that made for irreligiousness did not appeal to the king. He felt that there must be some religious acts of absolute value without which piety and morality have no meaning. If religious cults were altogether a matter of indifference, how is it conceivable that Christianity and Islam who had divided the world between them would combat each other and even regard mutual murder as an act of piety? Moreover, both religions appeal to a divine revelation and to prophets who performed miracles by divine authority. God must, therefore, in some way have some relation to man, and there must be some knowledge of God of which philosophers have no conception. The king decided, therefore, to consult the representatives of Christianity and Islam, in order to learn the true religion from them. He declined to consult the Jews at first because their humble social status indicated to him the worthlessness of their religion.

The Christian and the Mohammedan representatives explained the tenets of their respective religions to the king of the Chazars, each claiming to possess the only true religion, and supported their arguments by references to the Jewish Scriptures. This fact lead the king of the Chazars to consult a Jewish scholar also. Asked what the Jewish religion teaches, the Jewish scholar replied: "The Jews believe in the God of their fathers who freed the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, who per-

formed miracles for them, who led them into the Holy Land, who sent prophets unto them; in a word, they believe in what their sacred Scriptures teach." To which the king: "I was right in not consulting the Jews, seeing that their lowly situation had deprived them of all reason. Thou, O Jew, must needs presume thy belief in a creator and director of the universe instead of referring me dryly to a faith that could have a meaning only to thine own nation." Whereupon the Jewish sage: "But this very assumption that God is the creator and director of the universe demands weighty proofs, and the philosophers hold divers views on the subject, whereas the belief that God hath wrought miracles for Israel needs no proof, for it is based on incontestable ocular evidence." Arrived at this critical point, it was easy for Judah Halevi to develop proofs for the truth of Judaism. Philosophy banishes God and religion from the world; Christianity and Islam turn their back upon reason because reason contradicts the chief tenets of their religion. Judaism, on the other hand, starts out with an incontestable fact which reason cannot explain away; it is therefore consistent with reason, but it keeps reason within bounds and does not admit its conclusions that might easily lead to sophistries when certainty may be reached by a different way.

In the correctness of his views on the value of speculative philosophy, Judah Halevi was several centuries ahead of his time. While the contemporaneous thinkers—Jews, Mohammedans, Christians, Rabbis, Ulemas and church-fathers—bent their knee before Aristotle, placed his views of God and His relation to the universe almost above the Scriptures, or, at least, twisted biblical verses until they forced some philosophic thought out of them, and were thus believers and infidels in one breath.

Judah Halevi had the courage to assign to human reason its natural limitations, and to say to it: "Thus far and no further." Philosophy has no justification to gainsay admitted facts; it must regard them as incontestable truths; and with this as its point of departure it may begin its activity by reducing the facts to order and by throwing light upon them. Just as in the realm of nature thought cannot disavow actual phenomena, no matter how striking and unreasonable they may be, but must endeavor to fathom them, so it must proceed in the realm of religion. This thought that but recently forced its way to recognition through the many mazes of philosophy was first advanced by Judah Halevi. In a poem which is as fine as it is true, he estimates the result of the Greek spirit, eagerly imbibed by studious disciples of philosophy, by saying that Greek philosophy produces only blossoms but no fruits, that it is loquacious but does not fill the void in the heart.

From this point of view, Judaism cannot be assailed by philosophy, because it rests upon a solid basis, the basis of facts, which the thinker must respect. The Jewish religion came into the world all of a sudden, like a creation. It was revealed in the presence of a great multitude. The miracles that preceded the Sinaic revelation and that were continued in the wilderness were likewise of a public nature. But this visible providence of God for Israel occurred not merely a single time at the beginning of Israel's history, but continued often, and found expression continuously for five centuries in the effusion of the prophetic spirit upon individuals and upon entire circles. By virtue of its character of ocular actuality, Judaism contains a larger measure of certainty than philosophy can offer. The revelation of Sinai affords greater proof of the

existence of God than philosophic speculations can adduce.

In justification of the content of Judaism, Judah Halevi offers a view that, to say the least, is original. Assuming the truth of creation as recounted in the Bible, he suggests the thought that Adam, created by God Himself, born unstained and without disturbing paternal influences, was mentally and physically perfect, the ideal man, possessed also a prophetic nature to a certain extent, and was therefore called a son of God. This perfection Adam transmitted to those of his descendants whose psychic organization was susceptible to it. Through the long chain of generations, not without interruption, this capacity for virtue was transmitted to Abraham and, through him, to the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. The people of Israel, therefore, form the heart, the quintessence of humanity, exclusively qualified for the gift of prophecy. This ideal nature raises its possessors to a higher rank; they form, as it were, the intermediary step between the ordinary man and the angel. The particular spot best adapted for the preservation and the growth of this peculiarity was the Land of Canaan, chosen by God for that purpose; and just as Israel is the heart of humanity, so is the Holy Land the center of the universe, whence the prophetic influences emanated and spread their light throughout the world. The positive and negative commandments prescribed by Judaism are the means for the preservation of the divinely prophetic nature in the Jewish nation, as are the priests, the temple, the sacrifices and the entire cult. In how far these laws and institutions promote the main purpose God alone knows; but it is not given to human subtilizing to interfere with or to change them because the main purpose might be missed by the slightest change, no matter how

insignificant it may seem, just as nature by a slight change in soil and climate will yield a different product. The peculiarity of Judaism consists not in its moral duties and in its rational laws, as some suppose; these are to be regarded rather as the basic conditions for the constitution and the cohesion of a commonwealth. The essence of Judaism consists rather in its religious duties that are adapted for conserving in the Jewish people the light divine, the continual prophetic inspiration. And though the real significance of the religious precepts is unknown to human reason, they nevertheless reflect the wisdom of their divine author. Judaism prescribes neither a secluded nor an ascetic life; it is generally an enemy of brooding melancholy and demands from its adherents rather a joyous disposition. It recommends moderation for every activity of the soul and for every impulse of the heart, and thereby preserves a harmonious equilibrium between the individual and the national life. A pious man, as Judaism understands that term, neither flees from the world, nor despises life and desires death in order to attain the sooner the eternal life, nor denies himself the joys of life, but is a just master of his domain; his physical and psychic organism. He neither restrains unduly the forces of his body and soul, nor does he give them free reign; he controls them and utilizes them as ready tools by which to aim at the higher life that is rooted in God.

Having found the high value of religious practices, it was easy for Judah Halevi to vindicate Talmudic Judaism against Karaism, Christianity, and Islam. The aspect of servitude assumed by Israel in his exile among the nations is no proof of his deterioration and haplessness, any more than the power of which Islam and Christianity boast is proof of the divinity of their doctrines. Poverty

and misery, despised in the eyes of men, are of greater value in the eyes of God than inflated greatness and pride. The Christians themselves are not so proud of their potentates as they are of their sufferers, of Jesus Himself and of the apostles who, in lowliness and contempt, suffered martyrdom. The Mohammedans likewise glory in the associates of their prophet who had endured much suffering for His sake. The supreme sufferer, however, is Israel, because he is to humanity what the heart is to the human organism. Just as the heart feels most keenly every ailment of the body, so is the Jewish nation most cruelly affected by every misfortune that issues from the nations intentionally or involuntarily. To Israel apply the words of the prophet: "He bears our ailments, and our burdens are heaped upon him." Despite its unspeakable misery, the Jewish nation is not dead; it is rather like unto a man who is critically ill, whom the physicians had given up, but who expects his salvation by a miracle. To Israel applies the parable of the scattered dry bones that, upon the prophetic word, joined one to the other, assumed flesh and skin, received breath and resurrected. This parable fittingly and completely describes Israel in his wretched condition. The dispersion of Israel was a wonderful, divine arrangement in order to spread among the nations of the earth the light of his spiritual possessions. Israel is like unto a seed of grain that is imbedded in the ground, remains invisible for a time, seems changed into its constituting elements, and retains no trace of its original form; but after a time it begins to germinate and to sprout, assumes again its original form, throws off the distorting integuments, refines its elements and changes them in accordance with its nature until it gradually reaches its highest point of development. If mankind, prepared by Christianity

and Islam, should once recognize the true significance of the Jewish nation as the bearer of the light divine, they would respect the roots upon which they formerly looked with contempt, the ancient roots of the tree of Judah the fruit of which is the Messianic kingdom.

The lofty significance of Judaism and of the people that confesses it was certainly never preached with greater eloquence. Thoughts and feelings, philosophy and poetry joined in this original system to produce a high ideal that is to form the point of contact between heaven and earth.

Judah Halevi was not one of those who think nobly and act meanly; his deeds corresponded to his feelings. As soon as he reached the conviction that the Hebrew language contains an intrinsic divinity, that it was a consecrated vessel for a sacred content, he discontinued for a while his poetic efforts because he regarded it as a profanation to make the Hebrew language a vehicle for the Arabic metre. Moreover, convinced that the Holy City still retained the traces of the divine presence, that the gates of heaven were still to be found at the gates of Jerusalem, and that the sacred places that once reëchoed with the voice of the holy prophets were still a source of inspiration and might impart rapture and higher peace to the susceptible soul, his poetic nature was filled with the spiritual glory of Palestine, and he determined to make a pilgrimage to the land of his dreams and to spend the eve of his life amidst the scenes sacred to the Jewish heart.

This irresistible longing for Zion made it impossible for him to persist in his determination to sing no longer, and found expression in a noble series of poems. The Zionides, whose creator Judah Halevi was, form the very flower of neo-Hebraic poetry, and are comparable to the Psalms in beauty and sublimity:

"O city of the world most chastely fair
In the far West, behold I sigh for thee.
* * * * *
Oh! had I eagle's wings, I'd fly to thee,
And with my falling tears make moist thine earth."
(Lady Magnus' version.)

This is the keynote of all his songs of Zion. But what a wealth of feeling, imagery and beauty he unfolds in them! Israel's past arises in his lines in a transfigured form, and Israel of the present appears now with the crown of thorns of a thousand woes, now with a dazzling crown of a glorious future. His lyrics involuntarily sway the soul of his readers, impart to it grief and sorrow, hope and jubilation, and leave upon it a lasting, deep impression which is a mixture of dreams and convictions. The poet-philosopher felt himself drawn to the ancient home of Israel as though by invisible hands from which he was unable to disengage himself, and he started on his pilgrimage. His journey through Spain resembled a triumph. His numerous admirers in the cities through which he passed vied with each other in showering attentions upon him. With a few faithful companions he set sail for Egypt (about 1141). Delayed by unfavorable winds, after a stormy voyage which he described in a masterful poem, the ship did not arrive at Alexandria till the Feast of Tabernacles (September), and Judah joined his coreligionists with the determination to sojourn in their midst but a short while. However, upon the urgent solicitation of his host, 'Aaron ben Zion ibn Alamani, an eminent physician and the rabbi of the Alexandrian community, a man of wealth and a liturgical poet himself, who bestowed the highest honors upon his honored guest and his companions, Judah agreed to postpone his departure, and remained in Alexandria three

months, until the festival of Hanukah. From Alexandria he was about to journey to the port of Damietta where resided his friend Abu Said ben Halfon Halevi whom he had known from Spain, but he had to change his plans when he received an urgent invitation from the Jewish prince Abu Mansur Samuel ben Hananiah to visit him in Cairo.

Abu Mansur, who occupied a high office in the Egyptian califate and who lived in the calif's palace, was, it seems, the officially recognized head of the Jewish communities of Egypt, and bore the title of Prince (Nagid). Judah Halevi could not refuse such a flattering invitation, particularly so because it was important for him to obtain from the Jewish prince letters of introduction for his trip to Palestine. The wonderful Nile that bore his ship to Cairo recalled to his mind reminiscences of Israel's remote past which found expression in two poems. Though treated by Abu Mansur with cordial hospitality, he was restive in Cairo and longed to reach the goal of his journey. His Egyptian friends attempted to dissuade him from his journey, pointed out the dangers to him, and remarked that the reminiscences of divine providence at the beginning of Jewish history were linked with Egypt also. But Judah Halevi replied: "In Egypt, divine providence showed itself in haste, as it were; while the Holy Land was its permanent seat." He finally (1142) tore himself away from his Egyptian friends and admirers and set sail for the Holy Land from the port of Damietta.

Palestine was then under the sway of Christian kings and princes, collateral relations of the heroic Godfrey of Bouillon, the commander of the first crusades, and these rulers permitted the Jews to live in Palestine and even in its capital, Jerusalem. At the time of Judah Halevi's journey that region was not at all disturbed by military expeditions, be-

cause the Christians, the effeminate *Pullani* (descendants of the Crusaders) who had lived in Palestine for a generation, loved their ease and bought it from the hostile Islamic emirs at any cost. Jews stood high in the petty courts of the Christian princes of Palestine, and a bishop complains that through the influence of their wives those princes preferred the employment of Jewish to Christian or Saracen physicians—probably because the latter were charlatans or quacks.

It seems that Judah Halevi reached the longed-for goal, and that he visited Jerusalem; but his visit in the Holy City was brief. The Christian inhabitants of Jerusalem, it would seem, annoyed him and made his sojourn in the city intolerable. Of the last days of his life little is known. The last vestiges of him lead to Tyre, where he was received with honor by the Jewish community. In a poem addressed to a Tyrian friend, he laments over his disappointed hopes, and his vanished youth and strength:

"These are not the rain drops pouring from the skies;
They are the tear drops welling from my eyes."

and when the poet considers the inward fever that is consuming him he wonders "How from a mass of fire lakes can well." This poem cannot but affect the reader profoundly by the cry of utter despair on the part of such a heroic soul. In Damascus he sang his swan song, the glorious Zionide, in which, like the psalms of Asaph, he pours forth his yearnings for Jerusalem. The date of his death and the place of his sepulchre remained unknown. Legend has it that while he was prostrating himself on the sacred soil of Palestine, singing his doleful Zionide, an Arabic knight rode his horse upon him and

pierced him with his sword; it points out his grave in the village of Kabul, and his tombstone bears this anonymous inscription:

"A man inquired where mercy doth abide,
Where gentleness and where humility;
The graces three assembled and replied:
'Here where Judah is—there are we.'"

This epitaph, however, does not do the slightest justice to the significance of this personality, at once ethereal and mighty. Judah Halevi Abu al-Hasan is the transfigured image of Israel with all his thoughts and aspirations of the past and of the future.

CHAPTER IV

THE SECOND CRUSADE: MOHAMMEDAN PERSECUTIONS IN SOUTHERN SPAIN

(1146-1171)

In the first half of the twelfth century, the Jews of Northern France, under the two Capetian kings, Louis IV and Louis VII, occupied as favorable a position as under Louis the Pious. They enjoyed general prosperity, and owned not only houses but also fields and vineyards which were cultivated either by themselves or by Christian servants. Half of the population of Paris, a city of little importance at that time, consisted of Jews. The Jewish communities were recognized as independent corporations, and were governed by their own mayor under the title of prévôt, whose duty it was, among other things, to protect the interests of the members of the community against the Christian population, and to compel Christian debtors to pay their Jewish creditors under the pain of imprisonment. The Jewish prévôt was elected by the Jewish community, and confirmed by the king or by the baron to whom the city belonged. Jews came in contact with the court, and held official positions. R. Jacob

Tam, the greatest rabbinical authority of his time, was highly respected by the king.

Under these favorable circumstances, the Jews of Northern France could devote themselves to the study of the Talmud, and follow in the footsteps of Rashi. This great commentator of Troyes died in the very midst of his labors; and his disciples endeavored to fill in the gaps left by him. Rashi transmitted to his school the spirit of searching, subtle inquiry, of fine analysis; and his disciples improved upon their master. The critical understanding of the Talmud was regarded by Rashi's disciples as such a sacred duty that they did not hesitate to subject to criticism even the commentaries of their master. As the same time, however, they held him in such veneration that they durst not lay down their own opinions as independent studies, but only as additions (Tosafot) to Rashi's commentary. From this circumstance, this school received the name of Tosafists. The main characteristic of the Tosafistic tendency is that they disregard authority and seek to comprehend the subject before them with their own mind. Because of their deep intimacy with it, the voluminous Talmud, with its appendages, its multitudinous arguments, statements, principles and opinions, all stood out bold and clear before them; and by virtue of their acumen they dissected every Talmudic idea and proposition into its component elements with surprising analytical ingenuity, set at variance the apparently related, and brought into closer relation the apparently unrelated. It is almost impossible to give to the uninitiated an adequate conception of the critically acute method of the Tosafists. The most difficult logical operations they perform with the ease of a simple child's sum. The brittle Talmudic element turned into soft dough under their hands, out of which they shaped surprising new

formations. From Talmudic statements that, from a superficial view, bore no relation whatever to a given condition, they deducted numerous analogies and made them applicable to the case in point.

The circle of the first Tosafists consisted largely of Rashi's relatives, his sons-in-law Meir ben Samuel of Ramerupt (a small town near Troyes) and Judah ben Nathan; his three grandsons, Isaac, Samuel and Jacob Tam, sons of Meir, and finally a German, R. Isaac ben Asher Halevi of Speyer, likewise related to Rashi's family.

Outside of the Talmud, no other branch was cultivated by the Northern French and Rhenish Jews. Poetry does not flourish in an atmosphere where logic holds sway and where imagination is admitted only to the extent of devising new cases and complications of Talmudic discussions. Biblical exegesis was likewise treated in a Talmudic manner. Most of the Tosafists were biblical exegetes also, but their exegesis is haggadic in character, and they paid little attention to the essential meaning of the Scriptures. Tosafot were written on the Pentateuch as on the Talmud. Only two men—Joseph Kara and Samuel ben Meir (flourished about 1100-1160)—were an honorable exception, and their importance is all the greater when one considers that they were reared in an environment that militated against a rational biblical exegesis. Joseph Kara was the son of Simon Kara, the compiler of Haggadahs (Yalkut Shimoni), and Samuel ben Meir was reared by his grandfather Rashi to hold the Haggadah in reverence. Nevertheless, both forsook the old method and devoted themselves to a strictly grammatical exegesis. Samuel ben Meir (abbreviated into Rashbam), in his rational exegesis, was bold enough to offer interpretations that contradicted the Talmud, that sounded Karaitic and bordered on heresey. Unfortunately the intel-

lectual activities of the Jews both of Spain and of France were soon checked by the occurrence of tragic events.

When the greatest neo-Hebraic poet lamented: "Have we a home in the East or in the West which we may call our own?" he may have had in mind only the insecurity of the position of his coreligionists. Too soon, however, the Jewish people were to learn the fearful truth that they really had no home upon the earth, and that the peace they enjoyed in the lands of the exile was due solely to the inconsistency of the nations with their respective churches. Only so long as the intolerant spirit inherent in the Church and in Islam was allowed to lie dormant as a result of the indifference, the habits or the self-seeking of their adherents could the Jews enjoy any measure of happiness. But as soon as that spirit was roused and the nations yielded to the influence of their respective religions, its necessary consequences were misery and martyrdom for Israel. Though the Jews in general, and their leaders, rabbis and sages in particular, were ordinarily superior to the Christian leaders in piety, morality and knowledge, the latter, nevertheless, looked down upon the former with contempt. In Christian countries the Jews were outlawed because they would not believe in the son of God and some other doctrines, and in the Mohammedan countries because they would not recognize Mohammed as a prophet. Here they were expected to do violence to their reason and to accept fairy tales as profound truth, and there it was demanded of them to acknowledge dry formulas dressed in a philosophic garb as religion. Both offered them the tragic choice between death and the denial of their ancient faith. Frenchmen and Germans vied with wild Berbers in rendering still more feeble the weakest among the peoples of the earth. On the Seine, on

the Rhine, on the Danube, on the shores of Africa and of Southern Spain there sprang up simultaneously, as though by mutual agreement, a bloody man-hunt against the adherents of Judaism in the name of religion, unmindful of the fact that whatever of good and of God the religions of the persecutors contained was borrowed from the Judaism which they combined to exterminate. Hitherto persecutions of the Jews occurred only sporadically, but since 1146 they became more frequent, continuous, consequential and persistent. The very era that saw the dawn of a new civilization surpassed in inhumanity the dark ages of barbarism. This period of trials and tribulations set upon the Jewish people that seal of sorrow, that expression of martyrdom which even the freedom of the present age could not obliterate entirely.

The primary causes of the persecutions that spread simultaneously through Europe and Africa are to be found in the upheavals that occurred in Asia and in Africa. While the Christian knights of the new kingdom of Jerusalem and the adjoining principalities were growing steadily more feeble, a Turkish hero, Nureddin, appeared on the scene, and threatened to drive all Christians out of Asia. The important city of Edessa had fallen into his hands and the helpless warriors of Christ had to appeal to Europe for help. As a result, the second crusade was preached in France and Germany, and the bloodthirsty fanaticism was again turned loose upon the Jews.

King Louis VII of France, tortured by conscientious scruples, took the cross in person, and his example was followed by the young and frivolous queen Eleonora and the ladies of her court. As the abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, a truly saintly man, single-hearted and eloquent, also called upon the people to participate in the crusade, the number of

the pilgrims grew from day to day. This time it was the pope, Eugenius III, who called the attention of the crusaders to the Jews. He issued a bull exempting every one who joined the crusade from paying to the Jews the interests on their debts. This was to be an additional incentive for the numerous Christians who were in debt to Jews to join the crusade, and formed a pretext for the nonpayment of debts due to Jewish creditors. The abbot Bernard, who usually condemned the employment of unholy means for holy purposes, was compelled by order of the Pope to preach the contents of the bull. Another abbot, Peter the Venerable of Clugny, exerted himself to the utmost to arouse the crusaders against the Jews and to induce King Louis, who was favorably disposed toward them, to permit the mob to persecute or at least to plunder the Jews. In a letter addressed to Louis VII, he repeated the sophistries invented by the robber-bands of the first crusade as an excuse for the plunder of the Jews in the name of religion, and said: "What avails us to seek the enemies of Christianity in distant regions, when the blasphemous Jews, far worse than the Saracens, are permitted, in our midst, to revile Christ and the sacraments with impunity! If the Saracens, who believe like us that Jesus was born of a virgin, still are to be damned because they deny His incarnation, how much more do the Jews deserve damnation who deny everything! Yet I do not ask that the accursed Jews be doomed to death, for it is written: 'Kill them not.' God does not desire their extermination; He desires that, like the fratricide Cain, they should be kept alive that they might experience greater misery, greater shame, a life worse than death." In conclusion he calls upon the king to deprive the Jews of their possessions either wholly or in part, for the Christian army that does not spare its own

means need not spare those of the Jews. In this train of thoughts there is consistency; it is the logic of Medievalism. King Louis, despite his favorable attitude to the Jews, could not help issuing a decree in accordance with the papal bull which exempted the crusaders from paying their debts to their Jewish creditors. Thus, for the time being, the matter rested with the plunder of rich Jews. Neither the kindly disposed king nor his wise minister, the abbot Suger, and, above all, the pious Bernard, lent countenance to a general bloody persecution as was the case during the first crusade.

In Germany, however, and particularly in the cities of the Rhine, the Jewish communities of which had hardly recovered from the wounds inflicted by the first crusade, the situation was different. The emperor Conrad III was powerless; the citizens who, during the first crusade, were generally friendly to the Jews were now against them. A French monk, Rudolph, a man of impassioned eloquence, left his cloister without the authority of his superiors, traveled from town to town, aroused the fanaticism of the Germans against the Jews, and preached that the crusade begin with the Jews, that the latter be either converted or exterminated. The emperor Conrad gave the Jews all the protection of which he was capable. In his hereditary estates he provided asylums for them in the city of Nuremberg, and other castles; and he urged their protection upon the princes and prelates over whose domains he had no control. His word, however, carried little weight. The first victims of the persecutions instigated by Rudolph fell in August, 1146. Simon the Pious of Treves, returning from England, was seized by the pilgrims in Cologne, given the choice between death and baptism, and was murdered upon his refusal to accept baptism. A woman, Minna of Speyer, was

subjected to the most brutal tortures, and died loyal to her God. These incidents indicated to the Jews of the Rhine the necessity of providing themselves with a place of refuge, and they induced some German princes, upon payment of considerable sums of money, to give them their strongholds or castles for their security. The Cardinal-Bishop Arnold of Cologne, as humane as his predecessor Hermann, turned over to them the citadel of Wolkenburg (near Koenigswinter), and gave them permission to arm themselves for defence. Wolkenburg thus became a place of refuge for many communities. As long as the Jews remained in their asylums, they were safe; the moment any one ventured beyond, he was seized by the "brothers," dragged to baptism, and killed in case of refusal. The Church prelates of the Rhine, however, were dissatisfied with the agitations of the monk Rudolph and with the massacre of Jews, particularly so since Rudolph urged the people to disobey the bishops. The archbishop of Mayence, Henry I, who was likewise the imperial chancellor and the viceroy, had received into his palace some Jews who were pursued by the mob; but the mob broke into his palace and murdered the Jews in the archbishop's presence. Thereupon the archbishop appealed to Bernard of Clairvaux, whose influence was greater than even that of the pope, and the latter wrote a letter in which he condemned Rudolph for his murderous agitations against the Jews, and styled him an unfrocked priest. Particular efforts, he wrote, must be made to spare the Jews. The Church places its hopes upon converting all the Jews some day, and for this purpose a special prayer is recited on Good Friday. "Would the hope of the Church be realized if all the Jews were murdered?" Bernard sent a circular letter of similar import to the clergy and the people of France and Bavaria.

As Bernard's letter made little impression upon Rudolph and the mob led by him, the former found it necessary to repair to Germany, to denounce the latter to his face, to order him peremptorily to discontinue his preaching and to return to his cloister. The people were so infatuated with Rudolph that they protested against Bernard's treatment of the bloodthirsty monk, and Bernard would have fared badly at their hands had not his reputation of sanctity protected him. Rudolph did, indeed, disappear from the stage, but the venomous seed he had sown bore fruits of destruction to the Jews. The more enthusiastic the crowd grew for the crusades as a result of Bernard's preaching, the greater was its aroused fury against the Jews. The mob was more consistent than the saint of Clairvaux and the bishops; and would not evade the correct logic: "If it is an act of piety to slay unbelieving Turks, it could not be sinful to massacre unbelieving Jews." When therefore the dismembered body of a Christian was discovered near Würzburg, the crusaders there assembled believed, or pretended to believe, that the Jews had committed that crime, and felt justified in making a sudden assault upon the Würzburg community (Feb. 24, 1147). Over twenty Jews suffered martyrdom on that day, among them the rabbi of Würzburg, Isaac ben Eliakim, who was murdered while engaged in the reading of a sacred book. Some Jews were so maltreated that the mob left them for dead, but they were later resuscitated and nursed by sympathetic Christians. The humane bishop of Würzburg had the bodies of the martyrs interred in his own garden, and sent the survivors to a castle in the vicinity of Würzburg. The German Jews fared still worse when the emperor Conrad with his knights had joined the main army of the crusade, and the mob of camp followers, unrestrained by the emperor's presence, could

indulge in crime with impunity (beginning of 1147).

The savage spirit of holy murder spread irresistibly from Germany into France when, in the spring, the crusaders gathered in that country too. In Carenton (Department of Manche) a regular battle was fought between pilgrims and the Jews, when the latter, gathered in a courtyard, defended themselves against an assault. Two brothers fought heroically, wounded and killed several pilgrims, until the enemy, still more infuriated by their losses, found an entrance to the rear of the Jews and massacred every one of them. Among the French martyrs of this period was the young Tosafist, R. Peter. The savage bands of the crusaders carried their bloody work even in the neighborhood of the cloister of Clairvaux, under the eyes of the abbot Bernard. They fell upon the Jewish community of Ramerupt on the second day of Pentecost, broke into the house of Jacob Tam, the most famous of the Tosafists, plundered all his belongings, tore a scroll of the Pentateuch, and dragged him into a field to murder him. He had already received five wounds in the head when he was saved by a passing knight of his acquaintance to whom he called for help and who exacted for his service a promise of a noble horse. The knight persuaded the band to turn their victim over to him, promising that he would induce R. Tam to accept baptism or surrender him again to their bands (May 8, 1147). It was certainly due to Bernard's influence that, outside of Carenton, Ramerupt and Sully, no other massacres occurred in France. In England, where Jews from France had settled since the days of William the Conqueror, and who stood in close touch with their French coreligionists, no persecutions occurred because King Stephen protected them energetically. In Bohemia, however,

one hundred and fifty Jews fell victims to the crusaders when they passed through that country. Only after the French crusaders crossed the German border did the Jews venture to leave the castles, and were no longer assailed. Those Jews who had submitted to baptism under compulsion were allowed to return to Judaism. A priest who was as pious as he was humane assisted them in this matter. He led them into France and other places, where he kept them until their brief membership in the Church was forgotten. They then returned to their homes and to their ancestral faith.

On the whole, fewer Jewish victims succumbed to the fanaticism of the second crusade than to that of the first because the princes, both temporal and spiritual, afforded the Jews greater protection, and partly because the Emperor of Germany and the King of France, who participated in the crusades, did not tolerate a marauding gang of riff-raff such as was led by William the Carpenter and by Emicho of Leiningen in the first crusade. The Jews, however, had to pay dearly for the protection given them; in fact, they had to stake their entire future. Since that time, the Jews looked upon the German emperor as their protector, and he also regarded himself as such, and demanded a return for it. As a consequence, the Jews of Germany who were formerly as free as the Germans and the Romans, became henceforth bondsmen of the Roman-German empire. This term (servi camorae) meant at first only that the Jews were to be as inviolable as imperial servants and that, in return for the protection given them by the emperor and the empire, they were expected to pay an extraordinary tax in addition to the ordinary taxes imposed upon all citizens. Gradually, however, that term assumed an invidious meaning; the Jews were regarded almost as serfs, and were reduced to the lowest so-

cial stratum in consequence. Their intellectual products therefore appear stunted; their poetry is nothing else than dirges, and as insipid and barbaric as their language. The German Jews formed a class of pariahs to the end of the eighteenth century.

While the Jews of Germany were still trembling in terror of the crusading mobs, there began a persecution of the Jews of Northern Africa that was of longer duration and that produced different effects. The instigator of these persecutions was a man who was partly a philosopher, partly a reformer and a conqueror, and who produced a peculiar politico-religious movement. Abdallah ibn Tumart, a native of Northwestern Africa, was a disciple of the mystic philosopher Al-Ghazzali of Bagdad. Upon his return to Africa, he preached to the artless Berber tribes simplicity of living and raiment, hatred of poetry, music and art in general, and war upon the Almoravidic kings who indulged in the refinements of life. In his religious teachings, Ibn Turmat rejected the Sunnitic doctrines of Mohammedan orthodoxy and the literal interpretation of the verses of the Koran that ascribes to God human feelings and passions. He gained a large following among the Berbers, and founded a sect which, from the circumstance that it laid special stress upon the absolute unity of God, was called Almovachides (unitarian) or Almohades. With the drum of rebellion in one hand and the sword of war upon the Almoravidic rulers in the other, Ibn Tumart propagated his religio-moral reformation in Northwestern Africa. Upon his death, his disciple Abd al-Mumin succeeded to the leadership of the Almohades, and was acknowledged as the Prince of the Faithful. Proceeding from victory to victory, he overthrew the kingdom of the Almoravides, and became the master of all

of Northern Africa. Abd al-Mumin was a fanatic. Just as he exterminated the Almoravides by fire and sword, not merely as political opponents, but also as heretics, he was determined to tolerate in his kingdom no other religion but his own.

When the capital Morocco fell into the hands of Abd al-Mumin, after a long and stubborn siege (1146), the conqueror summoned the large Jewish population of that city and gave them the choice between the acceptance of Islam and death. The Jews were plunged in the deepest despair when they realized that the new ruler was in earnest. However, Abd al-Mumin was induced to change his edict of persecution to the extent of permitting the Jews to leave the country and of granting them a respite which would enable them to dispose of their landed property and of such personal effects as they could not take with them. Those, however, who intended remaining in the African kingdom were to be forced to accept Islam on pain of death. Many Jews left Africa and wandered to Spain, Italy, and other places. The majority, however, feigned acceptance of Islam and awaited better days (1146). Whenever the Almohades captured a new city, they applied the same edict to its Jewish inhabitants. Christians also were persecuted similarly; but because Christian Spain was open to them and they could hope to be received with open arms by their coreligionists they remained more steadfast, and emigrated all together. Throughout the kingdom of the Almohades that extended from Morocco in the West to Egypt in the East, every synagog and church was destroyed, and not a vestige was left of the former presence of the Jews and Christians.

Though many Jews of Africa accepted Islam, most of them did so for mere appearance, since nothing further was demanded of them than that

they acknowledge Mohammed's prophetic mission and that they visit the mosque every now and then. Inasmuch as the Almohades did not watch over the conduct of the new converts, the latter observed in secret all the prescriptions of Judaism with the utmost scrupulousness. Even devout rabbis followed this policy, and quieted their conscience with the thought that neither idolatry nor the denial of Judaism was demanded of them, but merely the repetition of the formula, "God is God, and Mohammed is his prophet." Others found comfort in the conviction that their sufferings indicated the coming of the Messiah, and that their present trials would be of short duration. As pretended Moslems, the learned men of the African Jewish communities continued their Talmudic studies, and established Talmudic schools for the youth, though the latter had to study the Koran also. But conscientiously devout men could not long endure this duplicity. Many of them threw off the mask, confessed Judaism openly, and suffered the death of martyrdom.

Meanwhile the victorious Abd al-Mumin led his armies across the straits into Andalusia, and Mohammedan Southern Spain fell an easy prey owing to the internal dissensions that disrupted the country. The capital Cordova was captured first (June, 1148), and before the year was ended nearly all of Andalusia had fallen into the hands of the Almohades. The Jews of Andalusia, like those of Africa, were given the choice between Islam, emigration, or death. The beautiful synagogs were destroyed. The aged rabbi of Cordova, the philosopher Joseph ibn Zaddik, lived to witness the tragic fall of the oldest and most prominent community, but died soon after (end of 1148 or beginning of 1149). The splendid Jewish academies of Seville and Lucena were closed. R. Meïr, the son and suc-

cessor of Joseph ibn Migas, emigrated from Lucena to Christian Toledo, and he was accompanied by all those who were in a position to escape. The rest followed the example of their African coreligionists: feigned acceptance of Islam and practiced Judaism in secret. The women, children, and the property of the emigrants fell into the hands of the conquerors.

In this troublous period, when Mohammedan Spain ceased to be the intellectual center of Jewry, Christian Spain that developed its greatest power under the wise and humane emperor Alfonso Raimundez (1126-1157) became the refuge of the fugitives who fled from Andalusia, and formed a new rallying point in Jewry. Alfonso had a Jewish favorite in the still youthful Judah ibn Ezra, a nephew of the poet Moses ibn Ezra. Upon the conquest of the important fortress of Calatrava, on the border of Toledo and Cordova, the emperor appointed Judah its commander, and named him prince. And it was this imperial favorite who proved an angel of salvation for his unfortunate coreligionists who fled from the persecutions of the Almohades. Judah exerted himself to the utmost to provide shelter for them in Christian Spain, and employed his wealth for the purpose of ransoming the captives, clothing the naked and feeding the hungry. A large number of the fugitives settled in Toledo, and that city, under the protection of Christian rulers, became the new center of Jewish intellectual activity. Judah ibn Ezra rose still higher in the emperor's favor, and was appointed court chamberlain (1149). The only blot on Judah's character was his intolerance. Carried away by his zeal for Rabbinism, he persecuted the Karaites whose numbers had increased in Spain, and who ventured to challenge their mighty opponents in polemics full of abuse and invectives.

Thus the Jews, of Christian Spain, of Castile and Aragon, stood henceforth at the head of the intellectual movements. The foremost men of this period were Abraham ibn Daud and Abraham ibn Ezra, both of Toledo, unlike in character, tendency and fate, but alike in their love of Judaism and of knowledge. The former (b. about 1100, d. 1180) was acquainted with all the branches of the knowledge of his day, was a physician by profession, and devoted himself particularly to history, Jewish and general (a subject hitherto held in low esteem by the Spanish Jews), in so far as the inadequate sources of the Middle Ages were accessible to him. Ibn Daud was not a profound, original thinker, but was endowed with sagacity and a clearness of vision that enabled him to fathom philosophic thoughts and to shed new light upon them. He occupied himself with the highest problems of the human mind, and he could hardly conceive how men could devote their life to trivialities, even to philology, mathematics, theoretic medicine and law, and neglect the holiest mission of life which, from his point of view, was metaphysics, because it concerned itself with God. In a treatise written in Arabic he emphasizes this point with particular reference to a class of his coreligionists who were beginning to harbor a certain distrust of philosophy. "There are some people in our day," he remarks, "who have acquired a little learning, but are not able to hold in their hands both of these lights, the light of faith in their right, and the light of knowledge in their left hand. Because such people extinguish the light of faith with the light of knowledge, many believe that philosophy in general is reprehensible, and withdraw from it. Judaism, however, regards knowledge as a duty, and no one must turn his back upon it."

The aim of all philosophic theories should be the

practical realization of morality in the life of the individual and of the aggregate; and this is taught by Judaism also. This sound fundamental thought Ibn Daud expressed more clearly and forcibly than any of his predecessors. Morality produces certain virtues: a healthy family life, and good government based upon these virtues. In accordance with this, all religious duties of Judaism may be divided into five classes. One class emphasizes a true knowledge of God, a pure faith in and love of God. A second class lays stress upon strict justice and conscientiousness, the virtue of all virtues, conciliatoriness, unenviousness, love of an enemy—virtues that are rooted in humility. The relation of the head of the family to his wife, children and servants is regulated by a third class of prescriptions in accordance with the fundamental principle of love and of right. A fourth and large group describes the relation of the citizen to the state and to his fellow citizens, and teaches the love of one's neighbor, justice in social intercourse, and care for the weak and the afflicted. There is a fifth and last class of laws, such as sacrifices, the dietary laws, the ultimate reason of which is not given. These five groups are not of equal importance. The belief in God is of the highest importance; the ritual laws are of least importance, and for this reason were often disparaged by the prophets. Starting from a different premise, Ibn Daud reaches a different conclusion from Judah Halevi who is related to him in thought. While the latter regards the purely ritualistic laws as the foundation of Judaism by means of which the prophetic spirit is kept alive, the former regards these as of secondary importance.

Abraham ibn Daud was also a conscientious historian, and his contributions to history have been of greater service than his philosophic works. The

struggle with the Karaites of Spain that broke out afresh led him to study history and to use it for polemic purposes. After the death of the emperor Alfonso, and the fall of his favorite Judah ibn Ezra, which probably followed, the Karaites raised their heads again, and again entered into polemics. Ibn Daud, thereupon, undertook to prove that Rabbinic Judaism rested upon an unbroken chain of tradition that begins with Moses and reaches to his own time. For this purpose he compiled a chronologic succession of the historic leaders of Talmudic, gaonic and rabbinic times (1161). This work written in Hebrew, he called "The Succession of Tradition" (Seder ha-Kabbalah). Of special historic value are his reports of the golden age of the Spanish communities which he obtained either from older sources or from independent investigations. His statements are brief, but extremely trustworthy, and much can be read between the lines. His Hebrew style is smooth and occasionally poetic.

More learned, comprehensive and profound was Abraham ben Meir ibn Ezra (about 1088-1167), a man of remarkable mental endowments, who encompassed all that was great, and all that was insignificant in knowledge; quick, ingenious, full of bubbling wit, but without warmth of feeling. His acquaintance with all departments of learning, human and divine, was astounding. But there was a lack of firmness and consistency in his character; he was self-contradictory and given to levity; now he combats Karaism, now he makes concessions to it. His polemic is merciless, but he is concerned less with ascertaining the truth than with getting the best of his opponent. His was a spirit of negation, and he presents the most complete contrast to Judah Halevi to whom he was suposedly closely related. Ibn Ezra (usually referred to with the omission of his given name), combined in himself

irreconcilable contrasts. Clear of vision, of a keen, analytic mind, a bold investigator, he was at the same time such a fanatic believer in authority, that he condemned open-minded investigators as heretics. He was at once a relentless critic and a slave of the letter, a thinker and a mystic, deeply religious and a believer in astrology. These contradictions were manifested not in different stages of his life, but abided with him throughout his entire life.

In his youth Ibn Ezra dallied with the muse, and sang laudatory poems in honor of exalted personages; but though he was familiar with the technique of Arabic and neo-Hebraic poetry, he was no poet. His poetic effusions are artistic, learned, dry, unfeeling; his liturgic compositions are thoughts well expressed in verse, wise doctrines or admonitions, but they lack spontaneity and religious fervor. But he was second to none as a master of wit, pointed epigrams and sarcasm. The style of his Hebrew prose is admirable; one may even maintain that he created it; it is clear and direct, and free from circumlocution.

However, if Ibn Ezra does not take high rank as a poet, he takes first rank as a thorough and tactful expositor of the Scriptures which he treated from a grammatical point of view. He was a born exegete. In interpreting the biblical verses, he could draw freely upon the storehouse of his comprehensive knowledge and thoughts without the necessity of reducing them to logical coherence; for his restless, volatile spirit was not adapted for creating something complete and systematic. His commentary upon the Pentateuch is a sort of an encyclopedia in content and form. The language is vivid, smooth, witty; the explanation deeply penetrative. His wealth of knowledge and his wide reading and experience enabled him to render the Book of Books more intelligible, to make the sim-

ple meaning of the text plain and lucid. Through his commentary on the Pentateuch, Ibn Ezra became the standard-bearer of a sober, scientific interpretation of the Bible in contrast with the obscure Haggadic method. He formed a strong antithesis to Rashi. But while Ibn Ezra clung to the Masora, he insinuated occasionally in dark, enigmatic phrases that he doubted the high antiquity of the Pentateuch, and that some verses of the Torah were added by a later hand. However, one cannot decide definitely whether he was earnest in his orthodoxy or in his heterodoxy.

Economic difficulties due to the disturbed political conditions of Toledo, compelled Ibn Ezra to seek his fortune elsewhere. In his epigrammatic manner he makes merry of the ill-fortune that had condemned him to poverty: "I strove to acquire wealth, but the stars are hostile to me. Were I to deal in shrouds, not a man would die; were I to deal in candles the sun would not set until my dying day." As he could find no friends to support him in his home, he left Toledo and started his travels, accompanied by his son, Isaac, already a grown man. He visited Africa, Egypt, Palestine, Babylonia and was also in Bagdad where an exilarch, by authority of the calif, again possessed a certain sovereignty over the Oriental communities. In the course of his travels, Ibn Ezra observed much, and enriched his mind. Why he did not return home from the Orient is not known. This may have been due to the grief over his son who turned Mohammedan and remained in Bagdad. He did, however, return to Europe, and tarried for a while in Rome (1140) where his presence proved an epoch-making event in the cultural development of the Italian Jews. Although they were enjoying a certain measure of freedom, and the Roman community was subjected to no taxes

of any kind, the Jews of Italy stood nevertheless on a low level of culture. The Talmud they studied after the old fashion; of the correct understanding of the Scriptures they had no conception; their neo-Hebraic poetry consisted of wretched riming; and they were given to all the superstitions that prevailed then in Southern Europe. What a contrast between them and the Spanish traveller with his taste for the artistic, his sound mind and his philosophic education! The period of his arrival in Rome was propitious for the awakening of a higher culture. Just about that time, a bold priest, Arnold of Brescia, came forth with the assertion that the rule of the popes was in opposition to the spirit of the Gospels, that temporal power was not becoming to them, and that they should be exemplars of true humility. A certain critical spirit, connected with the aspiration for freedom, awakened in the pope's capital. The people hearkened to the enthusiastic words of the young reformer, refused obedience to the pope and proclaimed a republic (1139-1143). Ibn Ezra's presence in Rome coincided with this event. Youths and men gathered about him, in order to listen to the much travelled, learned Spanish sage, and he fascinated them with his pithy, vivid, striking and ingenious utterances. But though Ibn Ezra was treated in Rome with great consideration he did not tarry long, but wandered restlessly from one Italian community to another, was in Salerno, Lucca, Mantua, and composed with astounding readiness and rapidity literary works on various subjects, dedicating them to his patrons.

From Italy Ibn Ezra went to Southern France. Provence, because of its connection with Catalonia, was more susceptible to the influence of the Spanish-Jewish culture than northern France, Italy and Germany and formed in Jewish history the bound-

ary line between the strictly Talmudic and the scientific and artistic tendencies. The Jews of Provence participated in both tendencies, but did not achieve mastery in either, and ever remained admirers and imitators. Ibn Ezra's arrival acted as a stimulus upon the Jews of Provence. He tarried at first in the ancient community of Beziers (Bedars) that contained several scholars; and these men, of all shades of opinion, treated their guest with great consideration. The spirit of enlightenment that later prevailed in this city was awakened by Ibn Ezra. At the age of seventy, his restless nature led him to London upon the invitation of a wealthy patron who surrounded him with every comfort. Here he wrote a kind of a religious philosophy (Yesod Mora) which is of no great value owing to its confusion of thought and lack of systematic arrangement. Another work written by him in London, interesting because of its introduction which narrates a fictitious dream (Iggereth ha-Shabbath) is a defence of the traditional observances of the Sabbath from sunset to sunset against the suggestion of no less eminent an authority than Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam), a grandson of Rashi, that the days of creation began with the sunrise. Ibn Ezra felt impelled to combat this opinion vigorously "so that Israel be not led astray" and it sounds rather queer for the half-heretic to condemn the pious Talmudist. Though his host provided him with every comfort, Ibn Ezra left London after a brief sojourn and returned to Southern France. He died in Calahorra on the boundary between Navarre and Aragon, at the age of eighty-seven (Jan. 23, 1167). His intellectual vigor did not forsake him to the very end; his last work bears the stamp of as much freshness, sureness and youthful energy as his first.

In France there lived at that time a highly gifted man who was the greatest exponent of the Talmudic tendencies of the French school, thereby becoming a law-giver for many centuries, and who was influenced also by the spirit of the Jewish-Spanish school. Jacob Tam of Ramerupt (b. about 1120, d. 1171) was the most distinguished product of Rashi's school. The youngest of the three learned grandsons of the great teacher of Troyes, Tam, who was only five years old when his grandfather died, could not have been a disciple of his. But he developed such ability in the study of the Talmud that he far surpassed his contemporaries and even his older brothers, Isaac and Samuel. The winding passages and intricate paths of the Talmudic labyrinth lay open before him, and he ruled its entire domain with rare mastery. He combined lucidity of spirit with keenness of mind, and was the main founder of the Tosafist school. None of his predecessors displayed such thoroughness and marvelous analytical acumen in the domain of the Talmud. Though Jacob Tam was not officially a rabbi and was engaged in business, he was nevertheless regarded as the greatest rabbi of his time, and his fame spread to Spain and Italy. In the days of the horrible persecutions, when the fanatics of the second crusade nearly killed him and stripped him of all his possessions, leaving him only his library, he wrote his commentary of the Talmud. His was a steadfast character, imbued with a deep sense of religiousness and morality. The only weakness he displayed was in taking usury from the Jews, consistent with his liberal interpretation of the strict Talmudic laws of usury in general.

The abundance of learned rabbis in Northern France and in Germany, and the generally acknowledged authority of Jacob Tam produced a phenomenon that appeared for the first time in

post-Talmudic history. Under the presidency of the master of Ramerupt the first rabbinical synod assembled for the purpose of discussing opportune legislation of general validity. The councils held in France by the fugitive popes Paschal, Innocent II, Calixtus and Alexander III, probably stimulated the rabbis to call similar assemblies. The rabbinical synods, of course, were not conducted with the pomp and ostentation that characterized the church councils. The members of the synod gathered in some important market town frequented by Jews, in Troyes, Rheims and others, without display and ceremony but also without mental reservations and political intrigues. The resolutions of the rabbinical synods bore upon religious, moral and communal questions, and touched also upon the civil law since the Jews still possessed an independent jurisdiction.

One of such synods, most probably with the memories of the persecutions of the second crusade fresh in their minds, passed a resolution forbidding Jews to buy or receive as a pledge any crucifix, sacred vessels, vestments, church ornaments or prayer-books because such transactions might involve all Jewry in danger. At a largely attended synod composed of one hundred and fifty rabbis from Troyes, Auxerre, Rheims, Paris, Sens, Drome, Lyons, Carpentras, Normandy, Aquitaine, Anjou, Poitou and Lorraine, under the presidency of the brothers Samuel and Tam, resolutions were adopted to the effect that no Jew should sue a coreligionist in a Christian court without his consent or unless he refused to submit to the authority of a Jewish court; that no one should seek to obtain a communal office by intimidation or through political influences, but that the selection of the head of a community should be left to a free election and decided by a majority of the mem-

bers of the community. Violators of these and other synodal resolutions were placed under the ban; no Jew was to hold commerce with them, or even to accept alms from them. The ban against informers and traitors was renewed by this synod. Other resolutions were similarly adopted by the synodal assemblies and received the validity of law among the Jews of France and Germany. Among other things it was decided that Gershom's decree against polygamy could be revoked only by a hundred rabbis of three different countries such as France, Normandy and Anjou, and only for weighty reasons. This synodal power the rabbis wielded not despite the people, like the Catholic prelates, but in harmony with popular sentiment, and for the best interests of the communities. For this reason, their resolutions did not have to be frequently renewed as was the case with the church councils.

In his very advanced age, Jacob Tam witnessed a bloody persecution of the Jews in his vicinity, in Blois, that is memorable not merely for the cruelty with which the martyrs were treated, but also for the lying assertion, raised for the first time, that the Jews were using Christian blood for their Passover. It was a contemptible plot that kindled the stake for innocent victims.

In Blois, where about forty Jews lived, a Jew rode to the shore of the Loire at dusk in order to bathe his horse, and met there a Christian groom who came there for a similar purpose. The latter's horse, frightened in the dark by the white fur-coat that showed beneath the Jew's outer garments, began to rear and would not go near the water. The groom, in his efforts to invent an excuse for not watering his horse, told his master, the mayor of the city, a notorious Jew hater, that he saw a Jewish horseman throw the body of a murdered Christian boy into the water, and that

the sight of it so frightened the horse that it could not be induced to drink. The mayor who hated a certain Jewish woman, Pulcelina, who was very influential with his master, Count Theobald of Chartres, the Lord of Blois, embraced this opportunity to avenge himself upon his enemy. He repeated before the court the story of the murder of a Christian boy, and charged the Jews with crucifying him for the Passover festival and with throwing his body in the Loire. Count Theobald immediately ordered the incarceration of all the Jews with the exception of Pulcelina of whom he was very fond. Pulcelina calmed the fears of the imprisoned, relying upon her influence with the count. This hope, however, was soon frustrated by the count's wife, Countess Isabeau, who hated Pulcelina because of the count's fondness for her, and who had her watched to prevent her from approaching the count. The count's greed was the last ray of hope for the incarcerated Jews. The count had enquired from a Jew of Chartres what sum the Jews would offer to be released from the charge hanging over them. Upon consulting with friendly Christians, they replied that one hundred pounds cash, and one hundred and eighty in outstanding debts, probably the entire wealth of the small community, was all they could offer. Meanwhile, however, a priest appealed to the count's conscience, and urged upon him not to treat the matter lightly in case the charges were well founded. But how was the truth to be proven since the entire accusation rested solely upon the testimony of the groom? Medievalism had a way of discovering the truth in such doubtful cases. It applied the ordeal of water. The groom, stripped of his clothing was placed in a water-filled skiff on the river, and, inasmuch as the skiff did not sink, the count and the entire Christan population were

convinced that the groom's testimony was true, and Count Theobald immediately condemned all the Jews of Blois to death by fire. Before the stakes were set on fire, the priest called upon them to accept Christianity and save their lives; but as they remained loyal to their faith, they were first tortured and then cast into the fire. Thirty-four men and seventeen women, including Pulcelina, met their death on that day (May 26, 1171), amidst the chanting of a prayer. A very few saved their lives by accepting Christianity. The Christians, however, with their implicit faith in the water ordeal, were firmly convinced that the Jews justly deserved their death, and the chronicler reports briefly, as a generally accepted fact, that "Theobald, Count of Chartres, had several Jews burned at the stake because they had crucified a Christian boy for ritualistic purposes in connection with their Passover, and had cast his body in a sack into the Loire." Theobald was determined to wreak vengeance upon all the other Jews of the country also, when he was persuaded to desist by a certain Jew, Baruch ben David Cohen, who paid him a thousand pounds. Jacob Tam declared the day upon which the martyrs of Blois were burned as a fast day and a day of mourning. This fast day in memory of the martyrs of Blois perpetuated at the same time the first outburst of that baseless, insane lie, the blood accusation, that in the course of five centuries, demanded hecatombs of Jewish victims.

The death of Jacob Tam closes the line of the creative spirits of the French school; just as with the death of Abraham ibn Ezra the originality of the Spanish school came to an end. A personality appeared on the stage of history who combined within himself in the fullest measure the Tal-

mudic thoroughness of Jacob Tam, and the comprehesive scientific knowledge of Ibn Ezra, a man who brought about an eventful crisis in Jewish history—Moses Maimonides.

CHAPTER V

A RETROSPECT OF THE MAIMONIDEAN AGE

(1171-1205)

Ere black clouds gather over the House of Jacob from all sides to darken his horizon completely without leaving him even a glimpse of blue sky; ere the elements charged with destruction burst in fury upon the head of the community of Isreal; ere the murder and the scorn of the sons of Jacob become the religious principle of princes and peoples, freemen and servants, the great and the small; ere the haughty papacy, sitting upon the throne of God, fastens the badge of disgrace upon the garments of Jewish men and Jewish women; ere imaginations run riot invent instruments of torture for the most innocent among men; ere the lie of child murder, poisoning of wells, and witchcraft attached to the Jews gains ground; ere the thousand afflictions heaped upon the Jews drives the blood from their hearts, the marrow from their bones, the intellect from their brains and reduces them to weaklings; in a word, ere the Jews enter upon the hellish life that begins with Pope Innocent III, and finds its culmination with Ferdinand the Catholic of Spain, it is instructive to cast a glance

upon the Jewish communities scattered throughout the then known world, to observe their condition in the different countries, in order to see what they still possessed then and of what religious fanaticism had robbed them afterwards. The uncharitableness preached in the name of two religions was as yet impotent to stamp them as outcasts everywhere. While in one country they were already regarded as an accursed nation, they were looked upon in another country as human beings and citizens; while they had already become bondmen in one land, they were still entrusted with important offices by princes and cities of another land; reduced to serfs in one place, in another place they still carried the sword and fought for their freedom.

The Jews of Asia exceeded their European co-religionists in numbers; qualitatively, however, the latter were far superior, so that Europe must be regarded as the main seat of Judaism. Here Judaism awoke to self-consciousness; here Jewish thinkers sought the solution to the problem of the signification of Judaism within the other religions and peoples and of the duties that devolve upon the individual in the aggregate. Spain still enjoyed precedence because that consciousness was strongest there. Jews lived in all five Christian states, Castile, Leon, Aragon, Portugal and Navarre; Southern Spain alone, Mohammedan Andalusia, contained no Jews, at least such as made an open confession of Judaism, since its conquest by the intolerant Almohades. The former seats of Jewish learning, Cordova, Seville, Granada, Lucena, were deserted, and their place was taken by Toledo, the capital of Castile and of the entire country. Toledo became since that time the leading community of Spain, counting more than twelve thousand members and twelve magnificent synagogs. Among the Jews of Toledo there were

not only many wealthy and educated, but also brave and knightly men who could handle arms. Jewish youths learned the art of fencing in order to appear as knights. Under Alfonso VIII, surnamed the Noble (1166-1214), Jews were employed in the government service and contributed, on their part, to the greatness of the fatherland that had become dear to them. Joseph ben Solomon ibn Shoshan (b. 1135, d. 1204-5), called the "prince" (Nasi), learned, pious, rich and generous, enjoyed the favor of the king, and was probably employed by him in some diplomatic capacity. Another favorite of Alfonso's was Abraham ibn Alfachar, a master of Arabic prose and verse (1160-1223).

The aged historian and theologian, Abraham ibn Daud, who was the pride of the Jewish community of Toledo, fell a martyr in an anti-Jewish riot that occurred in that city in 1180. The cause of this disturbance is not known; it may have been due to the very partiality displayed by King Alfonso towards the Jews. This prince who had married an English princess carried on an open love affair with a beautiful Jewish girl, Rachel, who was called Fermosa because of her beauty. This relation continued for seven years, when a band of conspirators attacked the beautiful Jewess on her luxurious dais platform, and killed her and her friends in the presence of the king. On this occasion an anti-Jewish riot may have occurred which cost Ibn Daud his life.

The Jews of Toledo assisted Alfonso energetically in his war with the Moors. When he gathered a large army in order to repel the invasion of the Almohades under Yakub al-Mansur, the Jews advanced him the money needed for the equipment of the expedition. And when the battle of Alarcos (July 14, 1195) proved disastrous for him, and Alfonso was compelled to shut himself up in his

capital, the Jews vied with the other inhabitants in repelling the assaults of the enemy, and were instrumental in compelling the enemy to retire.

The Jews of Aragon, which included Catalonia, since Ramon IV, enjoyed peace and quietude likewise, and found leisure for the development of their intellectual powers. Alfonso II (1162-1196), a patron of Provençal poetry, was fond of men of literary ability, and the Jews, for the most part, were regarded as such at that time. Barcelona, because of its favorable location on the Mediterranean, was the most important community of Northern Spain, "a community of princes and eminent men," in the pompous phrase of the poet Harizi. At the head of the community stood Sheshet Benveniste, a philosopher, physician, Talmudist and poet (about 1131-1210). Familiar with the Arabic he was sent by the king of Aragon on diplomatic missions, and achieved honor and wealth. Like Samuel ibn Nagdela he owed his success primarily to his pen, and like him also Benveniste supported men of science and of Talmudic learning. Next to him in importance in Barcelona was Samuel ibn Hasdai Halevi (flourished 1165-1216), "a fountain of wisdom and an ocean of thought," as the poet Harizi describes him hyperbolically. He had five sons, one of whom, Abraham ibn Hasdai, gained a name in the history of literature as a translator of philosophic works, and as the author of an ethical romance, "The Prince and the Dervish."

The community of Tudela, a small town on the Ebro that was the apple of discord between the kings of Aragon and of Navarre, obtained its rights of equality with the Christian and Mohammedan inhabitants of that place by its courageous conduct, and possessed a castle of its own for its security. This little town produced a learned traveller, Ben-

jamin ben Jonah of Tudela, to whom Jewish and general history is indebted for interesting and truthful information. Either as a merchant or as a man of piety in search of traces of the Messianic redemption, he traversed (1165-1173) a large part of Southern Europe, and a portion of Asia and Africa, observed the peculiarities of every country and city, studied the life and customs of their inhabitants, and wrote down his observations in a book of travels which has been translated in nearly all modern languages. The small town of Gerona on the river Ter in Catalonia was the place of nativity of several able men with the surname of Gerondi who made their city famous. It was a rigidly religious community that kept aloof from philosophic influences, and placed the Talmud above everything else. It was the birth place of Zerahiah Halevi Gerondi, a keen critic who did not hesitate to find flaws in the greatest Talmudic authority, Alfasi, and to uncover them. R. Zerahiah was in advance of his time in his conception of the Talmud, for which reason his notes and comments on Alfasi under the general title of "Ha-Maor" met with the criticism of his contemporaneous scholars who were inclined to lean on authority. R. Zerahiah was also a poet, and wrote liturgic, occasional and humorous poems that, however, have little poetic merit.

In the district beyond the Pyrenees, in Languedoc and in Provence, the Jews enjoyed a period of happiness towards the end of the twelfth century. Though Southern France resembled Northern Spain in thought and custom, its partition among several rulers lent it a diversity that was advantageous to the growth of culture. It belonged in part to the French crown, in part to the German empire as a vassal state, to the king of Aragon as Count of Provence, to the Count of Toulouse and

St. Gilles, and to various liege-lords, counts, viscounts, and barons, all men of liberal views, lovers of the then flourishing Provencal poetry, and not overzealous servants of the Church. Next to the nobility there developed a free, prosperous middle class that cherished its independence dearly. The close relation of the inhabitants with the Moslems and the Jews had greatly diminished the Occidental prejudices against the Orientals. The free spirit of the Provençals that scorned the clergy, condemned the vices of the Roman court and produced the sect of the Albigenses, made them sympathetic with Judaism. Among the Provençal free thinkers whom the Catholic Church stigmatized as heretics, there were some who acknowledged that "the law of the Jews is better than that of the Christians." The rulers of Southern France appointed Jewish officials without prejudice, and entrusted them even with the highest office, the governorship of a province, which involved police and judicial powers in the absence of the lord of the district. The Jews therefore, felt elated, carried their heads high, were devoted to the interests of the country, and applied themselves also to intellectual pursuits. As the Christians of this region were given to innovations, so the Jews of Southern France applied the test of reason to the subjects of their investigations. Still the Jews of Provence were only faithful disciples of foreign masters; they produced nothing original, but were translators and dealers in the intellectual products of others. The Jewish virtues were cultivated by them to a high dgree. Their homes were open to every stranger. Rich men provided instruction for the children of the poor, and supplied them with books which then were very costly. The communities stood in close union with each other. If one community was threatened by danger the others stood ready to render assistance and to avert the

danger. Their prosperity was based upon agriculture and upon international commerce which was carried on from the various ports with Spain, Italy, Egypt, and the Orient, and which was then in a most flourishing condition.

The leading community of Southern France was Narbonne and contained a membership of three hundred. Under the government of the wise and energetic Duchess Ermengarde, the head of the community was Kalonymos ben Todros, a member of an ancient family and a descendant of the great teacher R. Machir who, under Charlemagne, had come to Narbonne to teach the Law. Kalonymos possessed many chartered estates, the ownership of which none could dispute. At the head of the ancient school stood Abraham ben Isaac (d. 1178) who was recognized as an authority, but whose learning was confined to the Talmud. Even his Talmudic learning was more comprehensive than profound, and even during his life time he was surpassed by his disciples Serahiah Gerondi and Abraham ben David of Posquières.

At that time there lived in Narbonne the family of Kimhi. The services rendered by the members of this family hardly earned for them their great fame, but they nevertheless exerted a greater influence directly upon Provence and indirectly upon posterity than great masters. The father, Joseph ben Isaac Kimhi (flourished 1150-70) came to Narbonne from Southern Spain presumably on account of the religious persecutions of the Almohades. He understood Arabic, translated Bahyah's work on moral philosophy into Hebrew, wrote a commentary on the Scriptures, and composed many liturgical poems. His most important service consisted in transplanting Spanish-Jewish culture upon the soil of southern France, and he thus completed the work begun by Ibn Ezra during his brief sojourn in that

country. To him is ascribed also a polemic against Christianity (Sefer ha-Brith) which represents a dialog between a "believer" and his Christian opponent. Whether this work was written by him or by some one else, it certainly belongs to this period, and throws a favorable light upon the condition of morality among the Jews in contrast with that of the Christian population. The believer maintains that the moral conduct of its adherents establishes the truth of a religion. There are no murderers, adulterers, and robbers among the Jews, while Christian highwaymen not infrequently rob and kill the weak. Jewish children are raised in decency and in fear of God; Jewish girls are chaste; a Jew is hospitable to the stranger, ransoms the captive, clothes the naked and feeds the hungry. The Christian opponent admits these Jewish virtues as well established facts, and censures the Jews only for practising usury upon the Christians. This rebuke the "believer" extenuates by the statement that Christians also practise usury even upon their coreligionists, while wealthy Jews lend money to their coreligionists without any interest whatever.

His two sons, Moses and David Kimhi, followed in the foot-steps of their father. The former (flourished 1176-96) was even more mediocre than his father and his work betrays his mediocrity. His younger brother, David Kimhi (1160-1235), became, to be sure, the teacher of Hebrew both for the Jews and the Christians of Europe during the Middle Ages, but if one wishes to attach any value to his grammatical and exegetical works, one must forget that the masters Ibn Janah and Ibn Ezra had lived before him! With their work his can bear no comparison. David Kimhi presented no new point of view at all. His greatest merit consists in having facilitated the study of the Hebrew language, and in that his commentary approaches

nearer to a simple, logical exegesis than that of his contemporaries who indulged in exaggerated, fanciful and psuedo-philosophic interpretations.

The ancient community of Beziers that treated Ibn Ezra with such distinction was at this time in a happier condition even than Narbonne, under the Viscount Raymond Trencavel and his son Roger. Jews and Christians of this city entertained liberal views. Many citizens were Albigenses and renounced allegiance to the pope and to the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, the old custom was still in vogue in accordance with which the bishop incited his parishioners against the Jews on Palm Sunday, and the latter, armed with stones, made an assault upon Jewish houses. Inasmuch as the Jews lived in a separate quarter, surrounded by walls, and were always prepared for defense, each Palm Sunday passed off with a few broken heads. The representatives of the community finally induced the viscount to abolish this practice which was more disgraceful to Christianity than to Judaism. An agreement was drawn up by which any priest who was to incite the people against the Jews was to be excommunicated, and the Jews, in return, obligated themselves to contribute a pound of silver on every Palm Sunday. The viscount Roger who favored the Albigenses appointed two Jews, Moses de Cavarite and Nathan as provincial governors. But his favoritism to heretics and Jews drew upon him the anger of the clergy and of the pope, and he met with a tragic end.

An important community existed in the flourishing commercial city of Montpellier which was the capital of Southern France. It contained very wealthy and charitable members. Like those of Beziers, the Jews of Montpellier had a predilection for science which was fostered by the medical academy that was located in that city, and by the

academic freedom that prevailed there. The rulers of the city, however, were by no means so friendly to the Jews as those of Beziers.

Lunel, near Montpellier, a little town now, was then an important city under its lord de Gaucelin, and its Jewish community of about three hundred families were regarded next in importance to Narbonne. Its Talmudic academy, vying with that of Narbonne, attracted many students from abroad, the poor among them being supported by the community. The head of the community was Meshullam ben Jacob (d. 1176), who was extraordinarily praised by his contemporaries and who was regarded as the highest authority on all scientific and legal matters. Meshullam stimulated scholars to cultivate their respective departments of learning, and particularly to translate into Hebrew Arabic works of Jewish authors. He had five scholarly sons who indicated on a small scale the two tendencies that were to enter upon a determined conflict in the following generation. One of these, Aaron (flourished 1170-1210), schooled like the other Talmudists, had a special predilection for philosophy and for a philosophic conception of Judaism; his two brothers, Jacob and Asher, on the other hand, cultivated that mystic teaching, afterwards called Cabala, that abhors the light of reason. Jacob led an ascetic life, and drank no wine, whence he was surnamed "Nazarite." His brother Asher led an even more ascetic life.

On the whole, though, the scientific tendency predominated in the community of Lunel and was represented by Judah ibn Tibbon, the founder of the Ibn Tibbon family, and by Jonathan (ben David Kohen) of Lunel. The latter was a considerable Talmudic authority, but he loved philosophy none the less, and was one of the first champions to demand for it a rightful place in Judaism. Judah

ben Saul ibn Tibbon (about 1120-1190) was a native of Granada, and emigrated to Southern France on account of the persecutions under the Almohades. He practiced medicine in Lunel, and was so famous as a physician that princes, knights, and bishops sought his services, and he was sent for even from across the sea. He understood the Arabic thoroughly and cultivated the Hebrew with passionate devotion. His erudition, however, made him a pedant; he measured each step, and pondered deeply over each word whether to write it down or not. He attached much importance to elegance of handwriting and to similar externalities, and was therefore well adapted to the calling of a translator. Encouraged by Meshullam of Lunel and other friends, he translated successively from the Arabic into Hebrew Bahyah's "Duties of the Heart," Ibn Gabirol's ethics and "String of Pearls," Judah Halevi's work on religious philosophy "Cuzari," Ibn Janah's important grammatical and lexical works, and Saadia's religious philosophy. His translations, however, betray his entire pedantic character; they are literal, heavy, follow the Arabic original slavishly, and do violence to the Hebrew language.

His son Samuel (about 1160-1230) was the reverse of his father in character; more gifted but light-minded and indolent. His father expended the utmost care on his education; taught him medicine, Arabic, the Talmud and cognate branches. But because his father had always kept him under his control and tried to force his pedantic nature upon him, the son cast his admonition and instruction to the winds, engaged in foolhardly business enterprises instead of pursuing his medical studies, and lost all his money. However, while the father was despairing of his son, the latter pursued his studies in secret, and surpassed his father both in

the art of translation and in the knowledge of philosophic matters. He translated from the Arabic into Hebrew the works both of Jewish and Arabic authors.

Posquières, a small community near Lunel containing forty families, was the birthplace of one of the greatest Talmudists, Abraham ben David (b. about 1125, d. 1198). Educated under great teachers, and very wealthy, he maintained a school of his own that attracted students from far and wide whom he supported at his own expense. Of philosophy and of the higher conception of Judaism he had no idea whatever, and boasted of his ignorance in such matters. Like his fellow-student, Serahiah Gerondi, he possessed critical acumen which he applied in combating other Talmudic masters. He passed, however, beyond the bounds of scholastic criticism, and employed uncivil and insulting remarks against his opponents. Abraham ben David, perhaps unconsciously, sowed the first seed of a new mysticism that was destined to create mischief and confusion.

Bourg de St. Gilles, the second capital of Duke Raymond V of Toulouse had a community of a hundred families. This, like the other communities of Raymond's domain, lived peacefully under the prince whom the Troubadours styled "the good Duke." His son, Raymond VI, favored the Jews even more than his father did, and appointed them to administrative offices by preference. For this and other crimes, of a similar nature, Pope Innocent III and the clergy persecuted him bitterly, and finally compelled him to take a solemn oath to remove his Jewish officials, and, in general, to change his attitude toward the Jews.

For the Jews of Northern France, ruled in part by the king, and in part by more or less independent barons, the beginning of the last two decades of the

twelfth century proved the dividing line between happiness and misfortune. During the life-time of King Louis III, the Jews enjoyed peace and tranquillity, undisturbed even by the malevolent clergy. Louis refused to execute the decree of the Lateran Council that forbade Jews to employ Christian servants and nurses. At the suggestion of the Jews, he asked the pope whether that decree could not be set aside, and whether they could not receive permission to erect new synogogs. Despite the pope's unfavorable decision Louis ignored the canonical laws. His son, Philip Augustus, who assumed the regency (1179) on account of his father's sickness, did likewise, and when the archbishop of Sens demanded the execution of this and other canonical decrees that encroached upon the prerogatives of the king, the young king sent him into exile. Gradually, however, other influences and other considerations prevailed upon Philip Augustus and he became one of the most bitter persecutors of the Jews.

Though titularly the sovereign of France, and the liege-lord of the mighty king of England, the then king of France possessed but little landed property of his own. The small district of Francia (Isle de France) with several enclaves here and there, was his sole legacy. Philip Augustus was therefore determined to enrich the French crown with landed property and to transform his seeming feudal lordship over the barons into real power. To accomplish this purpose he needed money and troops first of all. Why not appropriate the wealth of the French Jews? Jewish usury, though but few Jews were in a position to engage in such business, and Christians also practised usury, and the charge of ritual murders, though Philip himself did not believe in that lie, could be used as pretext for extortion. Accordingly, on a Sabbath (June

19, 1180) while they were assembled in their synagogs, Philip Augustus ordered all the Jews of his domain seized and incarcerated, without placing any definite charges against them. Philip Augustus anticipated that the Jews would offer a considerable sum of money for their ransom; and his anticipation was realized. Upon payment of fifteen thousand silver marks they were set at liberty. This extortion, however, was a mere prelude. Before the year 1180 was past, he declared all debts owed by Christians to Jews null and void; a fifth of these debts, however, had to be paid to the royal treasury by the Christian debtors. Philip was encouraged in his robbery of the Jews by a hermit of Vincennes who assured him such a proceeding was an act of piety. Not content with having reduced the Jews to beggary, Philip Augustus issued an edict shortly after to the effect that all Jews must leave his domain between April and St. John's Day (June 24, 1181). They were allowed to dispose of their movables only; their landed property, fields, vineyards, granaries and wine-presses, was confiscated by the king. The deserted synogogs were converted into churches.

The falsity of the assertion that the Jews were hated by the French population on account of their usurious practices, the ritual murder of children and other crimes, is best refuted by the circumstance that counts, barons, and bishops endeavored to induce the king to revoke his edict of expulsion. Their efforts, however, proved vain, and the Jews had to leave Paris and its environs which had been their home for centuries, and to take the wanderer's staff in their hands. They spurned the suggestion of baptism as a means of saving their property and only a few yielded to this temptation. Fortunately for the Jews, the district in absolute possession of the king was small, and his vassals were as yet suf-

ficiently independent to ignore his order for the expulsion of the Jews from their domains. The Jews were thus permitted to remain in the larger part of France, and even those who had been expelled by Philip were given refuge therein. The Talmudic academy of Paris was discontinued, but that of Champagne remained in which the activities of the Tosafistic schools were continued.

A few years later (1191) Philip's persecutions resulted in martyrdom. As a result of some insignificant incident, Philip gave the Jews of Bray the choice between death and baptism. The members of the community did not hesitate a moment as to their decision. They encouraged each other to die by each other's hand rather than fall into the hands of the hangman. A hundred Jews were burned alive on Philip's order, and only children under thirteen were spared. A few days later the king with blood-stained hands, departed for Syria as a consecrated crusader.

All efforts to wrest Jerusalem from the heroic Saladin remained futile hitherto. Richard Coeur de Lion himself, with all his valor, had to submit to an ignoble peace, and succeeded only in obtaining the permission for Christian pilgrims to visit the sepulchre. A new crusade had to be preached, and again the Jews were its first victims. Pope Innocent III, the most reckless of all prelates, devoted himself to the cause of the crusade with enthusiasm. He authorized a preacher, Fulko of Neuilly, who had hitherto been an arrant sinner, to preach the crusade in all cities and villages; and the latter, a second Rudolph, employed the plundering of Jews as a convenient inducement to join the standard of the cross. Christians in debt to the Jews would be absolved from their debts if they took the cross. Many barons of Northern France grew enthusiastic, or feigned enthusiasm for the

new crusade; and their fanaticism once aroused, they expelled from their domains the Jews who had become impoverished as a result of the loss of their claims and from whom, in consequence, nothing more was to be gained. To every one's astonishment, Philip Augustus admitted these expelled Jews into his state, and permitted these whom he himself had formerly banished to return to their homes (July 1198). This inconsistent act of the otherwise consistent and rigid king attracted a great deal of attention in its day.

The king and the barons of Northern France regarded the Jews as a sponge out of which to squeeze gold, and were glad to see them grow rich at the expense of their Christian subjects because ultimately that wealth filled their own coffers. But since the days of Philip Augustus, the Jews lost one of their invaluable human rights—freedom of movement. While, hitherto, they could, like knights, move from place to place and settle where they listed, they were henceforth chained to the native places like serfs. If they left their native place, the landlord confiscated their property. Property rights were also denied them. "The property of the Jews belongs to the barons," became a legal maxim. The Jews came to be regarded more and more as profit-bearing villains that could be disposed of at a higher or lower price in accordance with their productiveness. A nobleman sold to the Duchess of Champagne all his property rights "in things and Jews."

In England and in the Feudal territories that then belonged to England the Jews enjoyed undisturbed peace during the reign of Henry II who had been hated by the church. They lived in the large cities, and in London some of them acquired such wealth that they were able to occupy palatial residences. The call to the first and second crusade received no response from the sober minded

islanders, and, hence, the Jews of England were spared martyrdom at that time. Some Englishmen manifested such a predilection for Judaism that they sought admission into the fold. There was one Jewish community that was composed entirely of proselytes.

The Jews of England procured their rabbis from France which then stood in very close relation with that country. The rabbi of London was Jacob of Orleans, a disciple of Jacob Tam, one of the famous Tosafists. The chivalrous son of Henry, Richard Coeur de Lion, was as free from anti-Jewish prejudices as his father, and the Jewish communities of England might have developed in peace under his reign had not the fanaticism kindled here, too, by Thomas Becket been fanned into a flame by a zealous priest. On the day of Richard's coronation (Sept. 3, 1189) the first storm broke loose over the Jews that terminated in their complete expulsion from the happy island kingdom within a century.

As Richard returned from the church to his palace after the coronation there entered into the hall, among others who came to offer their homage, also a Jewish deputation of the richest and most prominent men of all communities of England to present their gift of homage to the king. Upon their appearance, Baldwin, the archbishop of Canterbury, remarked to the king with a frown that it was unseemly for the king to accept gifts from the God-accursed Jews, and requested that their deputies be excluded from the hall. Richard who had no suspicion of the evil results that would follow from such an act, innocently yielded to the archbishop's request, and dismissed the Jewish deputies. But the palace servants who turned the deputies out of the palace interpreted the order of exclusion as a hint to mistreat them. The crowd that was assembled about the palace joined in and pursued the

Jewish deputies with fisticuffs, stones and sticks. A false rumor spread throughout London that the king desired the murder of the Jews. Thereupon the rabble and the crusaders made an assault upon the Jewish houses, set fire to them, and massacred many Jews. Among the victims was the Tosafist Jacob of Orleans. In vain did the newly crowned king send one of his courtiers to quell the disturbance; the mob would not hear him. The synagog was destroyed; most of the Jewish houses were burned. The fire spread and reduced a part of London to ashes. Only one Jew, accepted baptism —the rich Benedict of York, who, driven from the palace with his fellow deputy Josce, was dragged to a church and pretended the acceptance of baptism. When Richard learned the true facts of the case on the following day, he had most of the ringleaders executed; and so solicitous was he for the safety of the Jews of his kingdom that, fearing the London persecution might be imitated in England and in his French possessions, he issued a proclamation admonishing his subjects not to do violence to the Jews, and sent messengers to Normandy and to Poitou to prevent anti-Jewish riots there. He even granted permission to Benedict of York to return to Judaism when he learned of the latter's forcible baptism and heard him confess that he was a Jew at heart and wished to die as such. The fanatic archbishop of Canterbury who was present at the interview and was asked for his opinion replied: "If he does not care to be the son of God, let him remain the son of the devil."

As soon as Richard crossed the channel to enter upon the new crusade jointly with Philip Augustus, the scenes of London repeated themselves throughout England. The Jews of Lynn and of Norwich were assailed in their houses and murdered. Most tragic of all was the fate of the Jews of York.

Among them there were two men who possessed princely wealth and magnificent palaces, and thereby excited the envy of the Christians. These men were the two maltreated deputies Josce and Benedict, the latter succumbing to the wounds he received in London. Crusaders who wanted to enrich themselves, citizens who were envious of the prosperity of the Jews, noblemen who were in debt to the Jews, priests consumed by bloodthirsty fanaticism, all conspired to destroy the Jews of York. The Jews fled to a royal castle for protection. But the castle was besieged, and a monk, clad in white, encouraged the besiegers to storm it. The siege continued for six days, and the Jews defended themselves heroically, when the food supply gave out. Rather than fall into the hands of the enemy, the Jews agreed to slay one another. Josce, as the head of the community, set the example by killing his beloved wife Anna first; he in turn, was slain by the hand of the rabbi, Yom Tob of Joigny, a French Tosafist. The rest also perished, one by the hands of the other, just at the time when the last zealots, after the destruction of the Temple, met their death in the same manner in the castle of Masada in order not to fall into the hands of the Romans. Not a single Jew of the York community escaped. Altogether about five hundred perished. (March 17.)

On the following day, Palm Sunday, seventy-five Jews were murdered by the crusaders in St. Edmund. Everywhere in England where a Jewish community existed Jews fell martyrs, except in cases where they were protected by citizens. The community of twenty families, composed of Jewish proselytes exclusively, likewise met martyrdom. King Richard was greatly incensed at the outrages perpetrated upon the Jews, and ordered his chancellor to institute an investigation and to punish the

guilty. But the crusaders had departed, and the guilty citizens and noblemen had fled to Scotland. But while, in Richard's days, the Jews received occasional protection from the kind-hearted citizens, they were deprived of this assistance, too, under his brother John Lackland, who, by his scrupulousness, had reduced England to a vassal state of the popes. In the midst of his tyrannical reign, the Jews certainly could expect no consideration. Upon John's orders, the teeth of a Jew of Bristol were drawn out one by one until he produced the ten thousand silver marks which John demanded of him.

The Jews of the then extensive German empire fared somewhat better than those of France and England. The German peoples, it is true, were, by nature, more religious than the French and other Latins, and often rendered the life of the Jews a hell upon earth; but inasmuch as the emperor and princes protected the latter, the religious fury of the former was somewhat checked. The assistance given them by Henry IV in the first and by Conrad III in the second crusade, crystallized into the impression that the German emperor was the protector of the Jews, and that an attack upon them was, in a measure, an infringement upon his majesty. But though the Jews of Germany were regarded as imperial bondsmen, they were not, in the twelfth century, deprived of all personal rights. They were still allowed to carry arms, and to fight duels. When Worms was besieged, the Jews fought side by side with the Christians and the rabbis permitted them to carry arms on the Sabbath for defense. For the most part they had a separate jurisdiction, and did not have to appear before a non-Jewish magistrate. Here and there several of them occupied higher positions. The valiant Duke Leopold of Austria, who became famous in history

through the captivity of King Richard of England, had a Jewish administrator of finance, by name of Solomon, who, despite the canonical laws, was allowed to employ Christian servants. In Silesia, the Jews still possessed several villages in the vicinity of Breslau together with the serfs belonging to the villages. But with the gradual enforcement of the inhibition against the employment of Christian servants, the Jews had to dispose of their estates, to move to the cities, and to fall back upon commerce and the lending of money. The fiction that Jews employed Christian blood for ritual purposes found more credence in Germany than elsewhere, and whenever the dead body of a Christian was found the Jews were charged with the crime both by the people and by the princes. In the king's peace, instituted by Frederic Barbarossa before his departure for the Orient, the Jews, it is true, were also included. The emperor appealed to the clergy and to the monks not to incite the populace against the Jews. This, however, proved of little protection; outrages upon the Jews were perpetrated frequently during his reign and that of his successors from the Rhine to Vienna.

It seems hardly credible that Germany, in the midst of her mistreatment of the Jews, should have produced a Jewish poet who sang in the vernacular, a Jewish minnesinger who met with such recognition that he was admitted as a peer into the circle of German bards. The minnesigner was Süsskind (Suezkint) of Trimberg (a small town on the Frankish Saale) who sang after the manner of Walther von der Vogelweide and of Wolfram of Eschenbach.

In Italy history records no persecution of Jews at that time with the exception of a single case. The wise pope Alexander III was friendly to the Jews and had a Jewish minister of finance in the

person of Jehiel ben Abraham of the family dei Mansi, a nephew of Nathan, the author of the Talmudic lexicon. Upon his triumphal return to Rome, after a banishment of several years, by rival popes, the Jews met Alexander with flags and with a scroll of the Torah, a compliment paid to a pope by Jews which the chroniclers did not fail to record. The Jews were treated with respect and were free from all taxes. Alexander's favorable attitude to the Jews was evinced particularly in the decrees of the great council in the Lateran church (1197) in which more than three hundred prelates participated. Several fanatical prelates intended to carry through on this occasion a number of anti-Jewish laws. When the Jewish communities learned of this hostile intention "they trembled with apprehension and fasted three days in succession" in the hope of averting the danger thereby. History has no record of the details connected with this great council, but the final decrees prove that tolerance carried the day. The only anti-Jewish law passed by this council was the prohibition to employ Christian servants, in reality merely a renewal of an old canonical law. On the other hand, the council emphasized several decrees favorable to the Jews: they were not to be forced to baptism; no violence was to be done to them without a judicial order; they were not to be robbed, and were not to be interfered with in their religious celebrations.

In Southern Italy, in Naples and in Sicily, under the Norman rulership, the Jews enjoyed even greater freedom. Roger II and William III confirmed the Jews explicitly in the privileges of judicial autonomy, like the Greeks and the Saracens. Crossing the Adriatic from Brundisium one then entered into Byzantium. In Greece proper, Thessaly, Macedonia, Thrace and in several islands there were several populous Jewish communities.

The most important communities of the Greco-Byzantine empire were in Thebes and in Constantinople, both together comprising nearly two thousand families, the latter containing five hundred Karaites in addition. The Jews of Thebes were the most skilled makers of silk and purple in all Greece.

The policy of hating and humiliating the Jews that characterized Byzantium in its palmy days under Justinian and Alexius remained in force also in its period of decline and decay. The principle embodied in its constitution that Jews and heretics should not be permitted to hold any office and that they should be treated with the utmost contempt was carried out rigidly and consistently in the midst of the changing laws of this most capricious of governments. All Jews were deeply hated by the Greeks. A Jew was not allowed to ride on a horse, the badge of a free man; only as an exceptional favor did the emperor Emanuel bestow this privilege upon his Jewish physician, Solomon the Egyptain. Any Greek had the right to mistreat a Jew, or to treat him as a slave. The Jews were outside the pale of the law. The ever greedy Byzantium imposed the most oppressive taxes upon them. The Jews bore this humiliating treatment with the equanimity of martyrs. The persecutions to which they were subjected did not affect their characters; they were charitable to the poor and possessed many virtues; but it crushed their spirit. Byzantium contained many Talmudists and poets, but not one of towering greatness.

In Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine, the number of Jewish inhabitants could serve as a statistical standard for the comparative tolerance of Christianity and Islam. Wherever in those districts the cross prevailed, there were few and small Jewish communities; where Islam reigned Jewish com-

munities were many and populous. In all Palestine that was in Christian hands, there were hardly more than a thousand families. The largest communities were at that time those of Toron de los Caballeros (southeast of Jerusalem) containing three hundred families, and of Jerusalem and Askelon, the most important cities of Judaea, of only two hundred families each. The Jews, of Jerusalem were engaged, for the most part, in the dyer's trade of which they were granted a monopoly by the Christian king for a certain consideration.

Looked at quantitatively and not qualitatively, the chief seat of Judaism must be assigned to the Asiatic district on the twin rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris. In this region communities were still in existence that counted their members by the thousands. The former academic cities, Nehardea, Sura, Pumbedita, had, indeed, disappeared; but the communities of Bagdad and of Mosul (called New Nineveh) took their place as the leading communities of all Asia. The community of Bagdad contained a thousand families and four synagogs and enjoyed undisturbed peace. The calif Mohammed al-Muktafi (1136-1160) raised a Jewish favorite of his by name of Solomon to the dignity of exilarch, appointed him prince of all the Jews of the califate, and conferred upon him all the privileges enjoyed by the former exilarchs. The exilarch was given the right to surround himself with princely pomp, ride a horse, wear silks, embroideries and a distinctive turban indicative of high rank, be accompanied by a guard of honor, and use an official seal. When he appeared in public, he was preceded by a herald with the cry: "Make way for our lord, the son of David." Every Jew of Persia, India and Thibet, was obliged to pay him a poll-tax, and he received other revenues from market-places and merchandise. A portion of this income the exilarch

had to deliver to the calif. The exilarchate was thus restored to its pristine glory in the days of Bostonai. An important Talmudic academy arose in Bagdad whose head assumed the ancient title of gaon.

The community of Mosul, raised into the capital by the heroic Zenki, the father of the great Nur ed-Din, both the terror of Christians, was even larger than that of Bagdad, and contained nearly seven thousand families. The Jews of the district Adherbaijan (near the Caspian Sea) carried arms, stood on friendly terms with the neighboring savage Assassins, were the enemies of every one who was not a coreligionsist or an ally, often descended into the valleys upon marauding expeditions, themselves inaccessible in their mountain fortresses, and lived a free savage life, ignorant of any religious knowledge. They accepted the rabbis whom the exilarch sent to them, and were guided by their instructions. Among these Jewish free-booters there suddenly appeared an ambitious and shrewd man (1160) who wanted to exploit the military valor, the courage and the ignorance of these Jews for a purpose which is no longer known. This man, David Alrui (or Ibn Alruhi), was much talked about in his time, and is the hero (under the name of Alroy) of one of Disraeli's romances.

Another independent and warlike Jewish tribe lived east of Tabaristan (Persia) in the district of Khorasan, on the plateau near Nishabur. This tribe contained many thousands of families, and was ruled by a Jewish prince by name of Joseph Amarkala Halevi. These Jews of Nishabur regarded themselves as descendants of the tribes of Dan, Zebulun, Asher and Naphtali. They engaged in cattle breeding in the valleys and on the mountain slopes, were skilled archers, and stood on friendly terms with the Turkish hordes of the

Ghuses. At that time the Jews were scattered as far as Chiwa (Turkestan) that contained a community of eight thousand families, and Samarkand whose Jewish population was fifty thousand. Of the communities of India the traveller Benjamin of Tudela reports only that he had found black Jews there. Some Indian communities knew nothing else of Judaism than the observance of the Sabbath and circumcision. The Island of Candy (Ceylon) supposedly contained twenty-three thousand Jews at that time who enjoyed absolute equality of citizenship. The king of this island had sixteen viziers, four each for his own nation, for the Jews, the Christians, and the Mohammedans. Aden, the strategic port of the Arabian and the Indian Seas, contained a large Jewish community that was independent, had its own castles, waged war with the Christians of Nubia, and was in alliance with Egypt and Persia.

Arabia contained Jewish communities again, though the Jews had been banished from that country by the early califs. The holy cities of Mecca and Medina were still barred to the Jews, though possibly they had little attraction for the Jews since those cities had fallen into insignificance in the five centuries since the death of Mohammed. But the fertile and commercial Yemen contained Jewish communities. The Jews of Yemen enjoyed a reputation for benevolence: "Their hand is outstretched to every wanderer, their house is wide open to strangers, and the weary find rest among them." In Northern Arabia the Jews were still more numerous, and, as in pre-Mohammedan days, they composed again independent, warlike tribes, possessed strongholds, engaged partly in cattle breeding, partly in caravan trade, or, like the Bedouins, fell upon travellers and plundered them. A main group lived in Taima under a Jewish prince named Hanan who

claimed Davidic descent. They had in their midst a sect of ascetics who drank no wine, ate no meat, fasted the entire weak with the exception of Sabbaths and festivals, lived in caves or in ramshackle houses, dressed in black, and called themselves "Mourners of Zion," and were supported by the tithes of their agricultural and pastoral coreligionists. A second group of the Arabic Jews lived in the district of Talmas, and likewise had a prince of their own, named Solomon, a brother of Hanan Taima. Among them too there was a sect of ascetics who fasted forty days in the year in order to bring about the redemption of Zion. A third group lived in the district of Khaibar. This group numbered about fifty thousand, was warlike for the most part, but included a few Talmudic scholars also. Legend had it that the Jews of Khaibar were the remnant of the ancient Israelitish tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh. The semi-barbaric cities of Wasit, Bassora and Kufa also contained large Jewish communities; the first ten thousand, the second two thousand and the third seven thousand.

As a large part of Asia, from the Mediterranean to the Indus and Arabia, paid homage to the Abassid calif of Bagdad, the Jews of those districts stood under the jurisdiction of the exilarch of Bagdad. The second exilarch was Daniel, son of Solomon, who stood as high in the regard of the califs Al-Mustanjid and Al-Mustadhi as his father stood in that of Al-Muktafi. Under Daniel, the Talmudic academy of Bagdad reached a prominence that suggested the old days of the geonim, and was due to the influence of Samuel ben Ali Halevi of Bagdad. Samuel was a profound Talmudist, but inasmuch as he was unacquainted with the progress of Talmudic study as it developed in the schools of Spain and of France, he adhered to the letter of the Tal-

mud without any critical conception. He possessed, it is true, a superficial knowledge of philosophy, but he was three centuries behind the progress of philosophy. Despite his limited horizon, he fancied himself a great Talmudist and philosopher, and was generally arrogant and ambitious. Two thousand disciples attended his Talmudic lectures. On the occasion of his lectures, Samuel used to sit on a sort of a throne, clad in gold and silks, and addressed not his audience, but an interpreter who repeated his words to the students. Samuel was the chief judge also, and sat in judgment every Monday, surrounded by nine judges who were subordinated to him. Upon the death of the exilarch Daniel, Samuel ben Ali practically usurped the exilarchate, appointed rabbis and judges, kept the emoluments of the office for himself, and maintained his dignity by energetic means. Sixty slaves were even at his beck and call to bastinado anyone whom their master designated. Samuel ben Ali thus was the virtual ruler of the Jewish Asiatic communities from Damascus to India and from the Caspian Sea to Arabia.

Under the administration of this Samuel, messengers arrived from a heathen people of the Caucasus Mountains (Tartars?) who asked for Jewish religious teachers to intruct their people in Judaism, because seven of their princes had decided to embrace the Jewish religion (about 1180-85). The traveler R. Petahiah of Regensburg who reports these incidents, and is a reliable witness, testifies to having seen the Caucasian messengers with his own eyes. Some poor Talmudic scholars of Babylonia volunteered to travel to this far away region to instruct the proselytes in Bible and Talmud. But despite the political liberty the Jews enjoyed, Judaism in Asia was on a low level. Without any higher knowledge, without self-consciousness, the Asiatic

Jews fulfilled religious duties in an indifferent, mechanical manner.

As the Mohammedans of Egypt under the dynasty of the Fatimites were separated from their coreligionists of the Abassid califate of Asia, so the Jewish communities of Egypt had no relations with those of Asia. They had a chief of their own who was recognized by the calif, who exercised spiritual and judicial functions, bore the title of Nagid (prince; Arabic Reis), and was, in a measure, the Egyptain exilarch. The Nagid had the authority to appoint or confirm rabbis and precentors, and to impose fines, the lash or imprisonment for offenses or crimes; and received a regular salary from the communities, besides perquisites for the preparation of legal documents. At this time, this office was occupied by R. Nathanail with the Arabic name Hibat Allah ibn Algami, who was the physician in ordinary of the last Fatimite calif of Egypt, Aladhid, and afterwards of Saladin. Ibn Algami possessed considerable knowledge. He spoke Arabic with particular elegance and wrote several treatises on medicine. At the same time he conducted the academy in the Egyptian capital. The chief community, Cairo, consisted of two thousand Jewish families, very wealthy ones among them. A Karaitic community, supposedly even larger than the rabbinic one, also existed in Cairo. The Karaites had a chief of their own who possessed supreme judicial and religious authority, and bore the title of Nasi (prince, Reis).

The community next in importance in Egypt was Alexandria, with three thousand families. The cultural condition of the Egyptian Jews was not higher than that of their Asiatic brethren. The lower classes were so ignorant of their own religious sources that they adopted some Karaitic customs. And it was this very land of ignorance that

produced a man who was destined to proclaim a rational Judaism and to declare unrelenting war upon superstition. Through Moses, son of Maimon, Egypt became the centre of Jewry. He was a new redeemer of Israel, a second Moses son of Amram.

CHAPTER VI

THE AGE OF MAIMONIDES

(1171-1205)

In the last third of the twelfth century, Judaism seemed to have lost its center of gravity and to be on the point of dissolution. Southern Spain, as a result of the intolerance of the Almohades, had no Jewish communities whatever; at best, its Jews wore the mask of Mohammedanism. The communities of Toledo, the new capital of Christian Spain, and of other North-Spanish cities, had not as yet sufficiently developed to exert an extensive influence. The communities of Southern France (Provence) were as yet in the early stages of their growth, and those of Northern France (Champagne and Lorraine) too one-sided, too much absorbed in the study of the Talmud and in worrying over what the morrow would bring forth. The Jews of Germany had already become the bondsmen of the German-Roman empire; and those of the other European countries did not count at all. The newly restored exilarchate, the child of the calif's humor, did not, even in Asia, strike root deep enough to exert an influence whatever upon the

more cultured European Jews. Thus there was nowhere a centre around which the scattered members of Israel could rally. At this period of approaching dissolution, Moses Maimonides appeared, and he, all alone, without occupying any official position, became the unifying centre of Judaism, the rallying point of the communities of the East and of the West, the final, decisive authority. He was the intellectual king of Jewry to whom the greatest leaders of the communities joyously submitted. So memorable an event was his appearance even to his contemporaries, that even the day and the hour of his birth were recorded.

Moses ben Maimon (with the long Arabic name of Abu Imran Musa ben Maimun 'Abd Allah) was born in Cordova on March 30, 1135 (1:15 A. M.). His father Maimon, like his ancestors for eight generations back to Obadiah, the founder of the family, was a Talmudic scholar, a member of the rabbinic college of Cordova, understood also mathematics and astronomy, and wrote treatises on those as well as on Talmudic subjects; and it was he who inspired his son with an intense longing of knowledge and a yearning for an ideal life. When Moses was thirteen years old the great misfortune that overwhelmed the community of Cordova when that city fell into the hands of the fanatic Almohades (1148) caused his father to emigrate with his family and to wander for a number of years without finding a permanent home. Under such circumstances Moses reached his period of adolescence. By study and contact with men of learning, he acquired a store-house of knowledge and cultivated his mind to grasp all the phenomena of the seen and the unseen world, to strive after light and lucidity everywhere, and to reject all that was obscure, mysterious and mystic. His was a logical and systematic mind that ought to classify and to

reduce everything to order, a sworn enemy to the disorderly and the chaotic. In this respect he may justly be styled the Jewish Aristotle, and it was but natural that he should entertain the greatest admiration for the philosopher of Stagira. Aristotle had then many admirers among the Jews and Mohammedans—Christian thinkers could not as yet climb to his intellectual height; but no one before Maimonides had so thoroughly absorbed himself in Aristotle's philosophic views as to make them his own intellectual property, a part of himself, and, therefore, to discover the weaknesses they betray now and then.

Still, it is not alone comprehensiveness and profundity of knowledge that constituted Maimonides' characteristics but his loyalty to his intellectual convictions. He was a perfect sage in the highest and most honorable signification of that term. Pure religiosity, conscientious morality and philosophic wisdom united in him into a perfect union. If in the attainment of knowledge he stood on the level of his time, and morally and religiously he had but few peers, he overtowered his generation by his pronounced character. Maimonides was a man of deep earnestness who looked upon life not as a favorable opportunity for enjoyment, but as a difficult problem by which man could prove the truth that he was created in the image of God. He hated meanness, falsehood and sham; and because poetry was then regarded as based upon untruth and invention, in accordance with the epigram: "The best of poetry is—a lie," Maimonides took little interest in poetry, Hebrew or profane, and considered the time spent on it as wasted. But exacting as he was with himself, he was always charitable in his judgment and treatment of others. He attacked the false views and theories of his opponents; for these opponents themselves he showed the utmost con-

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sideration, and even found extenuation for them. Modesty and humility were peculiar to him in a high dgree as they are to all divinely gifted men.

In addition to those qualities of heart and mind, Maimonides possessed an extraordinary will power to carry his convictions into execution, and neither hardships, physical suffering nor detraction could divert him from his fixed purpose. The aim he set before himself was nothing less than the presentation of Judaism, biblical and Talmudic, its ritual and dogma, in such a light that members of other faiths and even philosophers must become convinced of its truth. This aim was the guiding star of his life from early youth to old age. At an age when most men had hardly completed their schooling, Maimonides undertook the task of presenting the Mishnah in a new light, a gigantic task in which he had no model to guide him. On this labor he spent six years, years of wandering and hardships. He began this work at twenty-three, and completed it at about thirty in Egypt.

It is no longer known what induced the family of Maimon to migrate from Spain to Fez (Morocco, 1159-60) where the Jews were forced to accept Islam, and where that family itself had to wear a mask. The condition of the Jews of Northern Africa under the reign of the Almohades was very deplorable. The religious restraint that continued for more than ten years, caused the African communities to waver in their faith. Only the steadfast spirits could remain loyal at heart to their ancestral religion while constantly feigning another religion. The thoughtless masses gradually accustomed themselves to the religion forced upon them and were on the point of believing that God himself had rescinded the revelation of Sinai and had given a new one in Mecca. Grieved at this spirit of hopeless resignation, Maimon, the father, deter-

mined to counteract it and to inspire with loyalty to Judaism the hearts of those who feigned Mohammedanism. With this object in view he addressed a hortatory letter in Arabic to the African communities (1160). The son also soon had an opportunity to step into the arena for the first time, to encourage his fellow sufferers, and to express his own views. A Jewish writer of excessive piety had maintained that all Jews who had followed Mohammedanism were regarded by the Jewish law as apostates and idolators, that whoever publicly acknowledged Mohammed as a prophet, even though he practice all the duties of Judaism conscientiously in secret, is to be regarded as an idolator, and his testimony before a Jewish tribunal, particularly in cases of marriage and divorce, is invalid; and finally that every conscientious Jew is in duty bound to sacrifice his own life and that of his children rather than acknowledge Mohammed as a prophet. Anyone who acts differently is an apostate. This letter sent by the zealot to the African communities seems to have caused a great deal of excitement among the secret Jews of Africa. The conscientious among them were plunged in grief, and felt weighed down by a burden of sin; and the masses considered the advisability of going over to Islam entirely since the Jewish law regarded them as apostates anyhow. Moses Maimonides therefore felt called upon to refute the views of the zealot and to vindicate the conduct of those who had feigned Mohammedanism, including his family and himself. This was his first appearance in public, and this first production already bore the stamp of a lucid mind that views a subject from every possible angle. In this apology, written in easily intelligible Arabic, he bases his arguments, like the zealot, against whom it was directed, upon the Talmudic point of view; but from the citations quoted he proves just the reverse.

Maimonides proves first of all that a partial violation of the duties of Judaism does by no means constitute an apostasy. The idolatrous Israelites in the days of the prophets were still regarded as members of the house of Israel. "But we," he continues, "by no means practice idolatry; we only repeat an empty formula which the Mohammedans themselves know we do not mean, but recite only to deceive the fanatic ruler." He then enters more deeply into his subjct. The Talmud prescribes that every Jew is in duty bound to suffer martyrdom rather than submit to the commission of the three cardinal sins of idolatry, incest, and murder; in fact, it is regarded as the highest merit to suffer death for each law in order to glorify the name of God. But the person who does not possess the steadfastness of the martyr does not, by his neglect to glorify the name of God, subject himself by any means to punishment on the part of the Law, is by no means, even from a Talmudic point of view, to be regarded as a transgressor of the Law, and thus lose the validity of his testimony. In cases of compulsion, the Torah abrogated every duty. Even if one actually worships an idol under compulsion, he does not subject himself to the punishment imposed upon the idolator by the Law. Moreover, one must distinguish between a transgression by deed and one by mere word. The Mohammedan authorities do not at all demand that the Jews deny Judaism, but merely that they pronounce with their lips the confession that Mohammed was a prophet, and have no objection if, in other respects, the Jew lives in accordance with the prescriptions of his own laws. Such a compulsion is really unparalleled. It is true that any one who prefers martyrdom to acknowledging Mohammed as a prophet deserves the highest commendation; but if any one asks whether he should sacrifice his life in such a case, the conscien-

tious answer, according to the prescriptions of the Talmud, must be in the negative. This apology of Maimonides (about 1160-64) evinces the rudiments of his independent conception of Judaism.

Maimonides seems to have exerted himself zealously to inspire his African coreligionists with loyalty to Judaism, to combat their indifference, and to hold out to them the hope of better days when they should no longer be compelled to lead a life of hypocrisy. This activity had nearly cost him his life, when a Mohammedan theologian and poet, Abu al-Arab ibn Moisha, interceded for him and saved him. The sense of insecurity coupled with remorse, induced the Maimon family to leave Fez and to emigrate to Palestine. After a sojourn in Acco (then called St. Jean d' Acre) the family departed for Jerusalem to pray on the site of the former temple, and thence to Egypt. A few months after their arrival in Egypt Maimon died (1166). The father and the son already enjoyed such high esteem that the latter received many letters of condolence from Africa and from Christian Spain.

In old Cairo (Fostat) where the Maimon family had settled, Moses and his brother David lived in retirement. The brothers established a business in jewels, which was managed by the younger brother David who undertook commercial journeys as far as India. Moses devoted himself entirely to his studies. But he was soon torn from this life of seclusion by adversities that would have overwhelmed a less courageous spirit. His beloved brother David perished in the Indian Ocean, and with him was lost not only the capital of both brothers but also money entrusted to him by other people. At about the same time, Maimonides was denounced to the government as a renegade against Islam. These misfortunes dejected him greatly and threw him upon a sick-bed for an

entire year. But his absolute faith in God, his yearning for study and the necessity of caring for his own family and that of his dead brother restored his courage and induced him to enter upon an active life. At this time, Maimonides supported his family, it seems, by the practice of medicine, but as he was as yet unknown his practice was not large.

But above all, Maimonides concentrated all his efforts upon the completion of his comprehensive work—his commentary on the Mishnah which he had begun at twenty-three and which he pursued in the midst of all the hardships and all the vicissitudes he had experienced. This masterpiece he completed (1168) in the Arabic language under the title "Siraj" (Illumination). The aim of this work was to lead the student at once to a clear understanding of the Mishnah and to its legal conclusion without the necessity of wading through the ocean of irrelevant discussions, and through the former commentaries in the Mishnah that were not always correct. This work is the first scientific treatment of the Talmud which only a lucid and methodical thinker like Maimonides could undertake because the nature of its material seemed to defy systematization. The scientific character of his work is evinced particularly in the illuminating introductions which his commentary contains. Maimonides treats with especial prepossession such points of the Mishnah as have a scientific tinge and which demanded illustration from mathematics, astronomy, physics, anatomy, ethics and philosophy. Here he was in his element. On such occasions he could prove that the sages of the Mishnah, the bearers of tradition, were not strangers to science. Above all, he succeeded in pointing out that the Mishnah contained lofty ethics and a profounder philosophic conception of God. He analyzes the nature of tradition and concludes that not everything contained

in the Mishnah is tradition. Only those laws are traditional concerning which there is no difference of opinion; traditional laws must be unconditional —a principle that unconsciously placed Maimonides in conflict with the Talmud. The tractate which contained the pithy sayings of the Fathers gave Maimonides a particularly rich opportunity to display all the treasures of his mind.

With an unconscious self-delusion, Maimonides undertook for the first time to develop a creed of Judaism—an innovation that had a far-reaching effect upon posterity. Inasmuch as Judaism was, from his point of view, nothing else than revealed philosophy, it must regulate the views and thoughts of man as much as his moral and religious conduct; nay, even more so, since morality has no value of its own and is only the result of a pure and true faith. He thus assumed as positive and indubitable that Judaism not only prescribes conduct but also regulates the higher thinking, that it sets up certain thoughts as indisputable truths which a son of Israel necessarily accepts. Such articles of faith are according to Maimonides thirteen in number: The belief in the existence of God, in his unity, incorporeality, immutability, eternity, and that he alone is worthy of worship, in prophecy, in the prophetic supremacy of Moses, in the divinity of the Torah and in its immutability, in divine providence, in reward and punishment, in the future coming of the Messiah and in a future resurrection. Although these articles of faith rest upon philosophic deductions, that is, need not be accepted blindly, Maimondes holds nevertheless that he alone is a true Jew who accepts all these articles as true, and he who rejects any one of these is to be regarded as a heretic, is excluded from the community of Israel, and has no share in the future bliss.

Maimonides thus raised Judaism to a height of

rational consciousness on the one hand, and set limits to the free development of thought on the other hand. Hitherto, religious conduct alone was regarded as the criterion of Jewish life; Maimonides placed freedom of thought under restraint and drew a line of demarcation between faith and heresy not on the solid basis of religious practice but upon the unstable ground of religious theory, thereby placing religious reasoning above religious practice.

With all the greatness Maimonides displayed in his commentary on the Mishnah, with all the knowledge, acumen and systematic arrangement he evinced therein that work did not bring him the fame he deserved, because it was written in Arabic and was addressed to a class of readers that lacked the intelligence to appreciate a master-piece of that nature. The first ones to spread his fame were his disciples who looked upon him as the personification of wisdom. One of his earliest disciples, Solomon Kohen, whom a journey had led to Southern Arabia (Yemen), was full of his praises and impressed Maimonides' greatness upon the communities to such an extent that in the day of their troubles they turned to him for advice and found in his words comfort and strength.

Far-reaching changes had just then set in in Egypt that brought about a favorable turn in the condition of the Jews of that kingdom and of the contiguous countries. The last Fatimite calif Alhadid had died or was removed, and the great Saladin, the model of royal nobility and of exalted knighthood in that barbaric age, became the sole master of Egypt (Sept., 1171) and of a part of Palestine and of Syria. Even the countries of the Euphrates and the califate of Bagdad obeyed his commands. His kingdom became a safe asylum for the persecuted Jews. But before Saladin had

firmly established himself, the fall of the Fatimite Shiitic califate, and its submission to the Abbassid or Sunnitic calif of Bagdad unloosened a savage fanaticism that involved the Jewish communities of Yemen in great danger. In Yemen the Shiitic party had gained the upper hand, and threatened the Jews with dire consequences if they refused to accept Islam. Like their brethren of Africa and Southern Spain the Jews of Yemen also feigned the acceptance of Islam (1172). But as the Yemenites were densely ignorant, there was grave danger that they would fall away from Judaism completely. To aggravate this danger, a Jewish apostle appeared who preached that Mohammed was foreshadowed in the Torah, and that Islam was a new divine revelation that abrogated Judaism. In addition, a visionary arose in Yemen at the same time who claimed to be the forerunner of the Messiah, announced that the troubles of the present were only an indication of the speedy approach of the Messianic kingdom, demanded that the Jews divide their property with the poor and hold themselves in readiness to receive the Messiah. This fanaticism to which many clung in their distress was fraught with the gravest danger for the Jews of Yemen. In this emergency, the most learned of the Yemenites, Jacob al-Fayyumi, turned for advice and comfort to Maimonides of whom he had heard through his disciple.

Thereupon Maimonides addressed a letter of consolation in Arabic (Iggeret Teman) to the Jewish communities of Yemen in which he sought to strengthen their religious consciousness to bear their trials with resignation, and pointed to the ultimate help of God. The persecutions to which the Jews were subjected, he said, did not come unexpectedly, because the prophets had foretold them definitely long ago. "Because God in his mercy had

distinguished us, the sons of Israel, and had chosen us as the leaders of the true religion, the peoples hate us; and they do this not for our own sake but because of the divine that dwells in our midst, in order to frustrate the divine plan, as it were. . . . Since the Sinaitic revelation no generation passed in which Judaism and its adherents were not subjected to persecutions. The nations in their hatred arose against us in three different forms; either with the sword, like Amalek, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Titus and Hadrian, in order to annihilate us, or with the lies of Sophistic persuasion, like the Persians, Greeks and Romans, in order to argue our religion away, or with cunning, like Christianity and Islam, masquerading in the guise of Judaism, in order to cause our faith to disappear. The enemies of Judaism have finally recognized that they can neither destroy the bearers of God's law, nor eradicate that law from their hearts, and have therefore resorted to deceit. They claim to have received a revelation of their own, and even acknowledge that the Sinaic revelation was binding in its day, but deny its further validity. . . . But the revelations of Nazareth and of Mecca bear the same relation to Judaism as an artistically painted human image bears to a vigorous human being. Only children or fools will take an image for a living being. These three forms of the bitter hatred of the nations to Israel and his divine law the prophets have foreseen, and, at the same time, assured the victory of Judaism over pseudo-religions. . . .

"And now, brothers," Maimonides appeals to the communities of Yemen, "ponder upon these truths, and be not discouraged by the troubles heaped upon you. These sufferings are sent merely to try you, and to prove that the descendants of Jacob, the children of those who had received the Torah at Sinai, are in the possession of the true religion."

In conclusion he admonishes the Jews of Yemen against the futility of calculating the period of the coming of the Messiah, and warns them against placing their hopes in false Messiahs who have ever brought down misfortune upon Israel.

This letter of consolation, written with much warmth of feeling, made such a favorable impression upon the Jews of Southern Arabia that they remained loyal to their faith, and took an active part in all that concerned Jewry. Later on, when Maimonides had reached a position of eminence, he found an opportunity of putting an end to the political oppression and the fanatic persecutions to which the Jews of Yemen were subjected. For this reason, the communities of Yemen clung to him with passionate devotion and with reverence. They mentioned his name in the daily prayer—a mark of distinction formerly conferred only upon the exilarch.

In the course of time Maimonides' greatness became known and received recognition. In the year 1175 he was already regarded as a decisive rabbinical authority, and religio-legal questions were directed to him—a compliment that always indicated general recognition. By virtue of his profound Talmudic knowledge, his character and his fame, Maimonides seems to have been officially acknowledged as rabbi of Cairo in the same year, an office which he regarded as a sacred priesthood, administered it with conscientiousness and circumspection, and endeavored to correct all abuses whenever they came under his notice. Although Maimonides urged the abolition of all Karaitic customs that crept into rabbinic Judaism he evinced the utmost tolerance to the followers of Annan. Asked what attitude the Rabbinites should assume towards the Karaites, Maimonides replied that they should be treated as brothers in the full sense of the word so long as

they kept within the bounds of decency and did not abuse the Talmud and its adherents. If the Talmud prescribes an attitude of friendship towards pagans and idolators, how much more so should they be treated with respect who are descendants of the seed of Jacob and acknowledge the one God. By the authority of his rabbinic office Maimonides instituted order and decorum in the synagog, and removed some objectionable habits connected with divine worship.

In the midst of his exertions in communal affairs, in his medical practice, and in his continuous studies of philosophy and natural science, Maimonides completed his second masterpiece (1180) which was an epoch-making event in Jewish history. This work was his religious code, called Mishneh Torah. If, as he states himself, he labored at this work continually for ten years, the time spent on it bears no relation whatever to the magnitude of the production. It is hardly possible for the uninitiated to form the slightest conception of the marvelous structure Maimonides erected; of how he brought together the remotest details from the vast shaft of the Talmud, and placed them in their proper positions; of how he separated the gold from the dross, joined the Talmudic again to the biblical, connected the particular with the general, and out of the apparently incongruous composed an organic whole, a work of art. If the Talmud be comparable to a labyrinthic structure in which one would lose himself without an Ariadne thread, then Maimonides created out of it a well ordered edifice with wings, halls, suites, chambers and small rooms in which a stranger may find his way without a guide, and may obtain a general view of all that the Talmud contains.

Next to the excellence of its form, the contents of this book have exerted a decisive influence upon

the development of Jewish history. All the various one-sided tendencies which his predecessors had cultivated on the soil of Judaism, Maimonides reduced in this work to perfect harmony. Nothing in this work is given prominence, nothing slighted. The philosophic, the moral, the ritualistic, and the genial sides of Judaism, so to speak, that express themselves in the hopes of a Messianic redemption, are treated in this work with equal appreciation. All the intellectual efforts of more than three centuries, since Saadia first attempted a rational conception of Judaism, all find their culmination in this book. One may almost say that Maimonides created a new Talmud. The Mishnah, the foundation of the Talmud, begins with the legal question: "At what hour may the Sehma be recited in the evening?" and concludes with the discussion when this or that bceomes Levitically unclean. Maimonides, on the other hand, begins his Talmudic code: "The main foundation, the pillar of all wisdom is to know that there is an original Being, the cause of everything that exists," and concludes with the words: "and the earth shall be full of the knowledge the Lord even as the waters cover the sea." There breathes in this work a spirit of true wisdom, placid piety, and profound morality. Maimonides admitted philosophy into his religious code, made it feel perfectly at home therein, and, as it were, assigned Aristotle a place alongside of the teachers of the Talmud. A large portion of the first book (Sefer ha-Madda) is philosophic in character.

The purpose of his work was to simplify the knowledge of Judaism in its entirety, biblical and Talmudic, which were one to him. He aimed at minimizing the prolixity and the obscurity that, owing to the Talmudic idiom, rendered the study of the Talmud so difficult; to bring order out of the chaos. The rabbi who is called upon to decide re-

ligious and judicial questions of every day life; the pious man who wishes to satisfy his religious duty of knowing the law; the student who desires to acquire a knowledge of the Talmud will no longer need wade through endless discussion, but will find all legal conclusions prepared and ready for them in the Mishneh Torah. He states almost explicitly that while his work is not to do away with the Talmud it is to supersede it. For this reason, he wrote his book in the easily intelligible neo-Hebrew dialect so as to make it accessible to everyone, and, in this way, to spread a knowledge of the Law and of Judaism in general.

In his habit of finding a comprehensive reason for every detail and of avoiding makeshifts, Maimonides, in fixing legal conclusions, was compelled to deviate from the Talmudic path. Inasmuch as he wished to analyze legal Judaism in all its parts, and to show clearly the relation betwen the Talmudic and the biblical, it was necessary for him to define clearly what is and what is not biblical. This distinction he lays down in a separate work (Sefer ha-Mizwot) which is a supplement to the Mishneh Torah. In this work, as in his code, he lays down the principle that not everything that the Talmud derives from the Pentateuch by means of the hermeneutic principles or otherwise regarded as biblical is really such; only those laws on which there is no difference of opinion are to be regarded as biblical.

Although Maimonides' theory, carried out consistently, tends to weaken Talmudic Judaism, in practice he regarded it as supreme. He looked upon the Talmudic sages as the highest authorities, second only to the prophets, as ideals whose example would lead to a virtuous, religiously perfect life.

Maimonides, by his code, placed rabbinic Judaism

upon a firm basis, and lent it new strength. On the other hand, he put fetters upon it. Much in the Talmud that was still in a state of fluidity and susceptible to explanation he stiffened into unassailable law. Just as his introduction into Judaism of articles of faith, themselves an offspring of intellectual speculations, put limitations upon freedom of thought, so his codification of the law deprived Judaism of its freedom of movement. Without regard to the conditions in which the Talmudic decisions originated, he lays down the Talmudic laws as fixed and binding for all time. In this respect, Maimonides was more rigorous than the Tosafists who, after a thorough investigation, often blunted the edge of a too keen Talmudic law by confining its applicability to the time and to the place when and where it was passed. Had Maimonides' code retained supremacy, as it seemed to do in the beginning, and had it supplanted the Talmud in the schools and in the Jewish religious and civil tribunals, Talmudic Judaism would have succumbed to petrification despite the philosophic and scientific treatment that Maimonides applied to it.

Maimonides' religious code created a mighty ferment in the Jewish world. The work was no sooner published than it was multiplied by copyists and spread through Arabia, Palestine, the Orient on the one hand, and through Africa, Spain, Southern France and Italy on the other. Ten years later its author could say without exaggeration that it penetrated to the furthermost lands of the earth. It was not merely read, but was regarded as a fundamental book, a new Bible, or a new Talmud, as it were. A contemporary recorded the impression and the influence which Maimonides' work produced in Spain: "Before this work reached Spain, the study of the Talmud was so difficult for the Jews of Spain that they had to depend entirely upon

the decision of the rabbis, since the laymen could not ascertain the definite legal results in the complexity of the discussions. But as soon as they obtained the work of Maimonides which was easily accessible to them on account of the lucidity of its language and its orderly arrangement, their eyes were opened and they realized its value. They absorbed themselves in it, and young and old gathered to study it and to acquire its contents. Now, there are many who are familiar with the law, and in the case of a legal dispute, are in a position to know what the law is, and to watch over the decision of the judge." What was true of Spain was true also everywhere, even in the Orient, where the study of the Talmud was pursued with greater zeal. The reverence for the great master grew day by day, particularly when it gradually became known that his private life corresponded to the ideal of a Jewish sage which he himself described. The most extravagant terms of praise were bestowed upon him. "The only one of his generation," "the standard of the rabbis," "he who illumines the eyes of Israel" were only modest titles conferred upon him. Maimonides' fame rang from Spain to India, and from the Euphrates and the Tigris to Southern Arabia, and eclipsed all contemporaneous celebrities. The most learned men submitted to his opinion and asked for instruction in humble utterance. He was looked upon as the highest authority in Jewry that honored in him its most worthy representative.

But Maimonides was not without petty opponents, either, who begrudged him his towering greatness; petty rabbis who, superficially familiar with the Talmud, regarded themselves as the possessors of all wisdom, and who were rudely awakened out of their dream by the appearance of Maimonides' work. In Cairo itself, some stupid

Talmudists refused to dignify his work even with a look, so that it could not be said they learned aught from it. Others were of the opinion that the academy of Bagdad alone was the true home of Talmudic knowledge, and that any one who did not draw upon that source was not a thorough scholar competent to pass judgment upon religious questions. The head of this petty opposition was Samuel ben Ali of Bagdad, the one who sat upon the richly decorated gaonic throne surrounded by his slaves and who admitted none his equal, let alone his superior. Maimonides treated this secret war upon him with the contempt of a philosopher. He had, however, honest opponents too, men who felt that his conception of Talmudic Judaism was not flesh of its flesh, who suspected heresy in his work, and regarded it as dangerous to every-day religion.

Mamonides' medical practice was very limited for many years; it was only after more than twenty years' residence in Egypt that he gained professional entrance in the court of Saladin. Maimonides, it is true, was not Saladin's physician in ordinary because the latter, engaged in continuous wars with the followers of Nur ed-Din and with the Christians, did not visit his capital for a long time; but the favor bestowed upon him by Al-Fadel, the noble vizier of a noble sultan, was tantamount to a distinction conferred by the king. Stimulated by his example, the other nobles who lived in Cairo also patronized Maimonides, and his time was so busily occupied that he had to neglect his studies.

As a medical writer also, Maimonides was famous. The famous Mohammedan physician and theologian Abd al-Latif of Bagdad, who stood high in the favor of Saladin, visited Cairo for the purpose of making the personal acquaintance of three

men, one of whom was Musa ibn Maimuni. The poet and cadi (judge) Al-Said ibn Surat al-Mulk extolled Maimonides' greatness as a physician in fanciful verses. His fame was so great, that Richard Coeur de Lion of England, the very soul of the third crusade, wished to appoint him his physician in ordinary. Maimonides declined this offer.

His patron, the chief judge and grand vizier Al-Fadel, dismissed an accusation against him that under a less tolerant Mohammedan or Christian judge would have involved the death penalty. The very Abu al-Arab ibn Muishah who had been Maimonides' savior in Fez demanded that he be dealt with as a Mohammedan apostate, since he had professed Islam for a time and then returned to Judaism. Al-Fadel, before whose tribunal the case was tried, decided that a confession under compulsion had no validity, and involves no consequences (about 1187). The vizier not only dismissed the charges against him, but also appointed him the official head (Nagid) of all the Jewish communities of Egypt, a dignity that remained hereditary in his family until the fourteenth century. Maimonides used his influence for the benefit of his coreligionists, and it was due to his exertions that the persecutions of the Jews of Yemen were terminated. When Saladin wrested Jerusalem from the hands of the Christians who had possessed it for nearly a century (Oct. 1187), he granted permission to the Jews, probably at the request of Maimonides, to settle in the city of their fathers, "and the sons streamed from all sides to their forsaken mother." Maimonides exerted himself also to obtain for his coreligionists special privileges not enjoyed by the Karaites, and to supplant the latter gradually in their favorable position at court so that some of them returned to rab-

binic Judaism—an achievement that was regarded as a highly meritorious act in his day.

The greater the recognition the extraordinary personality of Maimonides gained for himself the more determined were his detractors, with Samuel ibn Ali of Bagdad at their head, to belittle him. They embraced every conceivable occasion to insinuate that Maimonides was not a strictly religious Jew and not a loyal adherent of the Talmud, and secretly spread all sorts of calumnies against him, and when the seed scattered by Maimonides began to yield premature fruit, Samuel ben Ali and his associates took advantage of the phenomenon to disparage him in the eyes of his contemporaries.

In Damascus and Yemen there arose religious teachers who drew logical conclusions from Maimonides' writings with which he himself disagreed. Inasmuch as he emphasized strongly and repeatedly the immortality of the soul in a purely spiritual condition in a world beyond the grave, while on the other hand, he treated the resurrection of the body merely in an incidental manner, these disciples of his deduced that he did not seriously believe in the resurrection of the body, and they taught accordingly that, upon death, the body sinks into dissolution and decay, and only the soul rises to God. As this view is opposed to the explicit expression of the Talmud, it aroused a suspicion that Maimonides did not believe in the Talmud and that his code did not deserve the authority enjoyed. A certain Mar Zechariah of Haleb, a Talmudist of limited knowledge who felt himself eclipsed by the disciples of Maimonides, likewise exerted himself against the master and his disciples. But as the sage of Fostat had ardent and devoted adherents everywhere, Samuel ben Ali and Mar Zechariah had to proceed cautiously, and they set on foot a low intrigue that involved also one of the two exil-

archs of that day. Maimonides treated this procedure with contemptuous indifference and completely disarmed his antagonists.

Despite his friction with the party of Samuel ben Ali and his strenuous activities as a physician that hardly left him any leisure for study, Maimonides completed his work on the philosophy of religion, "The Guide of the Perplexed" (Moreh Nebukim, about 1190), a work that is of the utmost significance not merely for Judaism but also for medieval philosophy in general. This work presents the highest expression of Maimonides' intellect, and the justification of his inmost convictions. In its form, this epoch-making work appears to be a collection of separate essays on important points which the author elaborated for his favorite disciple Joseph ibn Aknin al-Maghrabi of Fez in order to calm the doubts that disturbed and harassed his soul; in reality, however, it was prompted by the necessity to make clear to himself his philosophic conception of the world, and the place that Judaism occupies therein.

Maimonides was, on the one hand, firmly convinced of the truth of the Aristotelian philosophy as elaborated by the Mohammedan philosopher Ibn Sena and others. On the other hand, he was no less firmly convinced of the absolute truth of Judaism. Both appeared to him to have the same starting point and a common goal. This philosophy recognizes the one God as the cause and the mover of all beings. Judaism teaches the unity of God with equal emphasis and abhors polytheism no less thoroughly. Metaphysics knows no higher aim for man than the endeavor to achieve the highest knowledge. Judaism also, even Talmudic Judaism, places knowledge, the knowledge of God, at the head of its commandments. If the truth which the human mind in its full vigor evolved out of itself

and the revelation which God gave to Israel on Sinai are alike at the beginning and at the end, then their separate parts must likewise correspond and be related to each other as one and the same truth only expressed in different ways. Judaism can all the less be in conflict with philosophy, since both are emanations from the divine spirit. The truth which God had revealed must be in harmony with that which lies in human reason as a divine gift; similarly, all truths which are the result of higher thinking must be found in the revelation, that is, in Judaism.

Maimonides takes Aristotle's views of the universe as the basis of his philosophy, and after a discussion of the Aristotelian system he develops his own views upon questions that concern man more intimately. Inasmuch as God is perfect goodness, all that comes from him is absolutely good; and inasmuch as God created the universe, it follows that the universe can be nothing else than good. The evil that exists in the world must be regarded not as created by God, but merely as the absence of goodness and perfection when the corporeal element is incapable of sharing in the good and in the divine. God did by no means create evil, but evil results from the nature of gross matter which is necessarily imperfect, and, as such, can receive and retain goodness and blessings only imperfectly. This evil, however, may be overcome. In the soul of man who is superior to every other being, composed of gross matter and a higher form, God has placed the capacity and the desire for knowledge. If the soul follow this innate desire, then the all-ruling divine reason expressly created for that purpose ("active reason") will come to meet it, in order to open for it the source of the divine spirit, that will enable it to perceive the nature of the universe and God's influence upon it, and to lead

a life in accordance with that knowledge. In this way man is able to raise himself to the higher grade of the angel, and to overcome the limitations of his material body. Through this rise to a higher sphere of thought and moral purity, man can make of himself a spiritual being, acquire immortality of spirit, and become at one with the all-ruling spirit of the universe. The possibility of attaining the highest degree is given to man with his free will.

Just as man may acquire immortality by means of his higher thoughts and deeds, so, by the same means, may he attract to himself a special divine providence. "In the lower or sublunar portion of the universe, divine providence does not extend to the individual members of the species except in the case of mankind. . . . Divine providence is related and closely connected with the intellect. . . . Those creatures, therefore, that receive part of that intellectual influence will become subject to the action of Providence in the same proportion as they are acted upon by the Intellect. . . . The greater the human perfection a person has attained the greater the benefit he derives from Divine Providence." (Vol. III, chs. 17, 18.) And just as man may acquire for himself the highest reward in the attainment of immortality and intellectuality, so does he call down upon himself the greatest punishment when he permits the light of his spirit to be extinguished by a sinful and material life.

Moreover, through an ideal life, by constantly devoting his thoughts and his acts to God, man may be able to cultivate within himself the capacity of prophecy. Of course, to the attainment of prophecy two elements are necessary: intensity of the imagination on the part of man, and the outpouring of the divine spirit on the part of God. But inasmuch as a vivid, powerful imagination is the main requisite of prophecy, prophecy can unfold itself solely

when the disturbing activities of the senses are relaxed, and the mind is free to give itself up entirely to the influences from above. The prophets prophesied always in a sort of dream. However, all the accounts given in the Scriptures of the actions and the conduct of the prophets while they were in a state of ecstasy are not to be regarded as actual facts but merely as inner, psychical experiences, as visions of the imagination. Then, too, there are various degrees in prophecy in proportion to the greater or lesser capacity requisite for it. In this way, many miraculous narratives of the Bible cease to appear supernatural and striking and the manner of speech of the prophets is thereby explicable. The acceptance of miracles is not opposed to possibility. The same Creator who ordained the laws of nature can also suspend them in part though only temporarily so that order be restored immediately. The waters of the Nile were transformed into blood only for a short while, the Red Sea divided only for a few hours. Still, the number of biblical miracles is to be limited. As a general thing, miracles are not the means by which the statements of the prophets are to be verified; such verification is rather attested to by the contents of their prophecies and by their fulfilment. Miracles do not at all prove the truths of the prophets.

The most perfect of all prophets was Moses whose prophecy differs in four essential points from that of the other prophets. This prophetic perfection Moses attained solely because he had made himself free, by the elevation of his mind, from the bonds of the senses, desires, and even from imagination itself, and climbed to the degree of an angel, or of a pure spirit. He tore off every veil that covered the eye of the human mind, and that interfered with its vision, and attained to the original source of truth. He reached a height never at-

tained by any other mortal. For this reason he was enabled to see God with the open eye of a pure spirit, and to learn his will. The truth radiated upon him from the highest Being without interpositions, in transparent clearness, and without word or speech. This truth that radiated from such a height Moses transmitted to his people as a revelation—the Torah. This revelation derived from God, like the mediator who handed it down to man, stands unique, is of its own kind. As a divine teaching it is perfect, and hence there can be no subsequent one to revoke its validity and to supplant it, even as nothing similar to it existed before it. And just as the divinity of the Torah is shown in its origin, so does it show itself in its contents. The Torah contains not alone laws and ordinances, but also dogmas on questions that concern man vitally, and this two-foldness of its contents is the very mark that distinguishes it from other legal codes and from other religions. All the laws of the Torah aim at a higher purpose, so that nothing in it should appear superfluous, indifferent or arbitrary. The mission of the Mosaic revelation may therefore be epitomized as aiming at promoting the satisfaction of the soul and the welfare of the body; the former by emphasis upon correct views of God and his providence and the latter by practical proofs of virtue and morality.

Maimonides' attempt to place Judaism on a level with the philosophy of his time proved of far-reaching import. For the thinkers of his time, his religious philosophy was in fact a "Guide of the Perplexed." Inasmuch as these men moved in the same sphere of thought, were Aristotelians by intellect and Jews by feeling, but perceived the wide gulf between their thinking and feeling, nothing could have been more welcome to them than to find the bridge that connected the two. Many

things in the Bible and in the Talmud that appeared to them objectionable or, at least, insignificant, received through Maimonides' method of conception a higher meaning, a deeper sense, agreeable to their thinking. On posterity in general Maimonides' philosophic work exerted a stimulating and suggestive effect. In view of Maimonides' elucidations, Judaism appeared to Jewish thinkers no longer as something foreign, belonging to the past, effete, a mere mechanical performance, but as something all their own, corresponding to their consciousness, present, intellectually living and vivifying. The Jewish thinkers since Maimonides always clung to Maimonides' "Guide," drew suggestive ideas from this source, and even learned from it to go beyond its point of view, and to combat it. And inasmuch as the thinkers, in the final analysis, always remain the leaders and the molders of opinion, it may justly be said that Judaism owes its rejuvenescence to Maimonides' thoughts. So completely did he hold sway over the minds of thinkers, that, for a considerable time, his work supplanted that of his predecessors, from Saadia to Ibn Daud.

But this philosophic work of Maimonides, written as it was in Arabic, reacted also beyond Jewish circles. For though he wrote it solely for Jewish thinkers, and urged upon those who wished to study it to copy it in Hebrew characters in order to prevent its falling into the hands of malicious Mohammedans and thus stirring up ill-feelings against the Jews; and though he admonished even his favorite disciple to guard the copy sent him against abuse on the part of Mohammedans and bad Jews, it nevertheless became accessible to the Arabs even in Maimonides' lifetime. One Mohammedan wrote an exhaustive commentary on Maimonides' chapters that deal with the existence

of God. The main founders of the Christian scholastic philosophy not only made use of Maimonides' philosophic work, but it was from that work that they first learned how to reconcile the conflict between faith and philosophy.

The weakness of Maimonides' system consists in that, prepossessed with the truth of the Aristotelian philosophy, it introduced into Judaism foreign, even irreconcilable elements, and that, instead of the God of revelation who looks down with mercy upon human kind, upon the people of Israel, and upon every individual, it set up a metaphysical being who in cold sublimity and exclusiveness must needs pay no attention to his creatures if his existence is not to evaporate in a mist of thought. He is hardly in a position to give this metaphysical God a full personality and complete freedom of will. Dear as Judaism was to his heart, it had to be at a disadvantage in his system. Because he would not take the revelation in its fullest meaning as a communication of God with his people, he had to transform Moses into a demi-god, raised above the human sphere. The ideal of a perfect man as Maimonides conceives it is attainable only by the very few, only by able thinkers, inasmuch as only such men are in a position to raise themselves to this ideal, through the long gradations of lower and higher knowledge. A mere moral and religious life, no matter how pure, is not sufficient, because God can be worshipped only by the highest, philosophically trained intellect. Accordingly only very few are able to attain immortality and the bliss in the world to come, and prove worthy of the divine providence. Finally, Maimonides is compelled to do violence to Scriptural verses and to give them a different sense in order to bring them into harmony with the results of the philosophic consciousness. The thinkers of Mai-

monides' time and his favorite disciple Joseph Moghrebi, himself, felt that his theory did not entirely harmonize with Judaism. This deviation was noticeable particularly in his dogma of the resurrection. It is true that Maimonides accepted it, but only in an off-hand manner; he found no support for it in his sphere of thought. On many sides he was asked to explain why he bestowed such a paucity of words upon the dogma of the resurrection, and he therefore felt called upon to write an apology, a treatise on the resurrection of the body (1191). In this treatise he explains that he himself believes in a bodily resurrection, but that it belongs to the realm of miracles the possibility of which is included in the acceptance of his theory of the creation. Maimonides complains in this treatise that he was misunderstood. On the whole, this treatise is written in a tone of irritation that is in strong antithesis with the calmness of his former works. He was vexed that he had to justify himself to "fools and women."

Among the learned Mohammedans Maimonides' "Guide" excited much attention, but was harshly criticized by them partly because of its casual attacks upon Islam and upon the flat but orthodox philosophy then prevailing, and partly because of its liberal views. Abd al-Latif, the same representative of the orthodox tendency in the Islamic world of the Orient who had come to Egypt for the purpose of making the acquaintance of three celebrities of whom Maimonides was one, said of him: "Moses the son of Maimon visited me and I met in him a person of very high merit, but I found him dominated by an effort to take first rank and to please mighty personages. In addition to his medical works he also wrote a philosophic book for the Jews that I have read. I regard it as a harmful book that tends to undermine the funda-

mental doctrines of religion by the very arguments that, to him, appear to strengthen them."

Maimonides' ideas found nowhere a more congenial soil than in the community of Southern France where prosperity, the rise of free cities and the uprising of all the Albigenses against the Church awakened a critical spirit, and where Ibn Ezra, the Ibn Tibbons, and the Kimhis had scattered the seed of a Jewish culture. The less the learned men of Southern France were able themselves to reconcile Judaism with the results of philosophy, the more they absorbed themselves in the writings of the sage who could so convincingly harmonize strict religiosity with free investigation, and whose works revealed circumspection, lucidity, thoroughness and depth. Not only laymen but even profound Talmudists like Jonathan of Lunel became enthusiastic for Maimonides, and paid homage to him as an extarordinary phenomenon: "Since the death of the last Amoraim no man like him appeared in Israel." Such was the opinion held of him by the Provençal Jewish thinkers. The poet Harizi sang of Maimonides:

"Angel of God art thou
Created in an image divine
Though bearing a human form."

Several communities and leading men of Provence turned to him with scientific questions, among them the scholars of Lunel with Jonathan Kohen at their head, and asked him at the same time to send them the "Guide" of whose fame they had heard. Maimonides could not reply to this highly flattering letter from Lunel for several years. A serious illness had confined him to bed an entire year, and this, as well as approaching age and the exertions of his medical practice weakened him considerably. Moreover, upon the death of Saladin

a civil war ensued between the followers of his ambitious sons and those of his brother Aladil; and Maimonides as a person in close touch with the court could not remain unaffected by those disturbances. Finally, however, Saladin's oldest son, Al-Fadel, ascended the throne of Egypt (1200), and Maimonides became his physician in ordinary. As this calif had formerly led a licentious life, and was suffering from attacks of melancholia and of fear of death in consequence, he ordered Maimonides to write for him a brief key to health. Among the rules of health compiled for him by Maimonides is included the remark that for the preservation of a sound body, a soul strengthened by morality and philosophic contemplation was also requisite, and that excessive indulgence in wine and in love saps one's vitality. He dared tell a capricious prince what no courtier would dare presume. He did not wish to be untrue to his calling as a physician of the soul.

Samuel ibn Tibbon, the chief representative of Jewish culture in Provence informed Maimonides of his intention to translate the "Guide" from the Arabic into the Hebrew, and expressed at the same time his longing to meet the greatest man of Jewry face to face. This information was a source of satisfaction to Maimonides, for he had long cherished the plan of translating his Arabic works into Hebrew. In a letter to the community of Lunel he takes occasion to exhort that community and the Jews of Provence in general to devote themselves to the scientific treatment of the Talmud: "Ye, members of the community of Lunel and of neighboring cities, are the only ones who hold aloft the banner of the prophet Moses. Ye cultivate the study of the Talmud, and cherish wisdom also. In the Orient, however, the Jews are dead to the intellectual aspirations. In all of Syria, Haleb is the

only city wherein some men occupy themselves with the Torah and with philosophy, but they are not in earnest either. In Irak there are only two or three grapes (men of wisdom); in Yemen and the rest of Arabia, they know little of the Talmud, they know only the haggadic interpretation, and that only in Maghreb. You know the condition of the Jews there (that they are compelled to feign Islam). And so you are the only ones left to become a strong support for the Torah. Be ye therefore strong and courageous." Maimonides felt that a Judaism enlightened by philosophy could find its chief representation in Provence.

In writing this, his last letter, Maimonides already felt that his strength was declining, and he died from debility at the age of seventy (Dec. 13, 1204), mourned by many communities in all the then known parts of the earth. In Fostat, Jews and Mohammedans instituted three days of public mourning, and in Jerusalem the community held an extraordinary memorial service. His body was taken to Tiberias. Legend has it that Bedouins attacked the bearers of his coffin on the way, but were unable to move the coffin from its place and finally joined the Jews in the funeral procession to the place of burial. Maimonides left only one son, Abulmeni Abraham, who succeeded his father in his position as physician to the calif and in his dignity as the head of the Jewish communities (Nagid) of Egypt. His descendants who maintained themselves to the fifteenth century were distinguished by piety and by Talmudic knowledge. Upon Maimonides' grave an anonymous admirer wrote a brief almost deifying inscription:

"A man, yet not a man; and if a man
An angel hath thy mother impregnated;
Or thus: Without a man and woman, God
An angel had upon the earth created."

This inscription was later erased, and the following words were substituted:

"Here lies Moses son of Maimonides the excommunicated Heretic."

These two inscriptions characterize the sharp antagonism that broke out after the death of Maimonides and that split Jewry into two hostile camps.

CHAPTER VII

THE SCHISM AND THE JEWISH BADGE (1205-1236)

If Maimonides, the philosophic rabbi and the deeply religious philosopher, forms the meridian of medieval Jewish history, then the shadows began to decline immediately upon his death. His legacy of suggestive thoughts produced a far-reaching separation in Jewry. The Church, in her ever increasing presumption, interfered in the Jewish factional strife, and proceeded against the synagogs either with an alluring bait, or with a deterring stigma, with secret poison or with blazing flames. The death of Maimonides and the supremacy of the papacy proved two misfortunes for Jewry that little by little forced them from the height to the lowest abyss.

The death of Maimonides left a void in Jewry, and stagnation in Jewish aspiration set in. While he was alive, the communities of the East and of the West voluntarily submitted to him; he had wise counsel for every emergency. Upon his death, however, Jewry was left without a leader, and Judaism without an authority. It is true that his son, Abulmeni Abraham Maimonides (1185-1254)

inherited his position as well as his character, but his spirit and his energy did not descend upon his son. Abraham was the physician of Sultan Al-Kamil, a brother of Saladin, and, together with the Arabic physician Ibn Abi Obsaibiya, the historian of Arabic literature, he had charge of the hospital of Cairo. He was likewise a Talmudist, warded off the attacks upon his father's learning with Talmudic weapons, and issued rabbinic responsa. He was also familiar with philosophy and wrote a book aiming at the reconciliation of the haggadic with the philosophic consciousness of the age. His knowledge, however, was rather borrowed property than original thinking. He followed slavishly in the footsteps of his great father and acquired his habits of thought to a certain extent at the expense of independent thinking. Abraham Maimonides, it is true, enjoyed the high regard of the communities from far and near, but he by no means exerted a great influence, and was certainly not regarded as an authority.

Neither in Africa and Asia, nor even in Europe was there a man worthy of Maimonides' mantle. Provence and Christian Spain contained many Jewish men of learning but none of them possessed a character powerful enough to dominate his age. When the worst times set in, there was no man to stand in the breach, to speak a momentous word at the proper hour, and to point out the right way to the faltering hearts. Had there been a man of Maimonides' spirit and character to take his place, the schism between the religious thinkers and the followers of the biblical letter would not have wrought such havoc, nor would the pernicious mysticism have exerted such an attraction as it did later on.

This orphanhood of Judaism was exaggerated by the enmity of a mighty foe in the beginning of the

thirteenth century, Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), who was the first to place the iron yoke of the Church upon princes and peoples that led to the enslavement and the brutalization of the human spirit, who was the first to persecute liberal thinkers, the father of the inquisition and the stake for heretics, that is, for such who dared question the infallibility of the Roman bishop; this pope was also an inexorable foe of Jews and Judaism, and inflicted upon them more serious wounds than all the adversaries who preceded him. To this mighty prelate in the Vatican who parcelled out crowns and countries, and who enslaved all Europe from the Atlantic Ocean to Constantinople and from the Mediterranean to the icy regions by means of his army of papal legates and Dominican and Franciscan monks with their bloodthirsty piety, the handful of Jews were a thorn in the flesh because the common sense of the Jews, their pure faith, their moral force and superior culture were a tacit protest against the Roman presumption. At the beginning of his reign, Innocent, following the example of his predecessors, seemed inclined to protect the Jews against violence and injustice. Inasmuch as preparations were making for a new crusade against the sultanate of Egypt that held possession of the Holy Land and that was considerably weakened since the death of Saladin, and inasmuch as the crusaders, by receiving indulgences, felt licensed to commit all sorts of crimes and depredations, the Jews appealed to Innocent to check the violence of the crusaders. Innocence graciously acceded to their request and bestowed upon them a constitution (Constitutio Judaeorum, Sep. 1199) in which he ordained that Jews be not dragged to baptism by force, be not robbed, injured or killed without judicial authority, be not disturbed on their festive days by the whip or throwing of stones, that

their cemeteries be respected, and their dead be not disinterred and dishonored. So degenerate had Christendom become that the promulgation of such a "Jewish Constitution" was at all necessary, and so blinded were its leaders that the head of the Church was prompted in the issuing of these decrees not by the simple sentiments of humanity and equity, but by the perverted notion that the Jews must not be annihilated but must be preserved in order that the miracle of their general conversion to Jesus might at some future time be fulfilled.

Innocent kept a watchful eye on the princes to prevent them from showing any favor to the Jews outside of merely permitting them to live. The French king, Philip Augustus, the arch enemy of the Jews, was charged by the pope with friendship for the Jews (1205) and reproached for it. In a letter to Philip the pope wrote that it grieved him to see that some princes were preferring the sons of the crucifiers to the co-heirs in the crucified Christ, as though the sons of the slave could inherit with the sons of the mistress. He had heard that in France Jews acquire the property of the Church and of Christians through usury; that, contrary to the decree of the Lateran Council, they employ Christian servants and nurses in their homes, that Christians are not permitted to testify against Jews, that the community of Sens had erected a synagog that was higher than the neighboring church, and that the Jews worship not quietly, as they did before the expulsion, but so loudly as to disturb the services of the church. Innocent finally censures the king for giving the Jews too much freedom so that they presume to appear on the streets and in the villages during Easter week and lead the faithful astray. He repeats with indignation the calumny that Jews employ Christian blood for ritual purposes, but the Head of the

Church has no harsh word against the slaughter of the Jews that was committed openly and was of daily occurrence. He thereupon admonishes Philip to prove his Christian zeal by the oppression of Jews, and he did not forget to remind him to exterminate the heretics from the land. In the same year (May, 1205), Innocent addressed a sharp pastoral letter to Alfonso the Noble king of Castile, because he, a friend of the Jews, refused to grant the clergy the right of depriving the Jews by force of their Mohammedan slaves through baptism, and of exacting a tithe of the products of Jewish and Mohammedan fields. He threatened the Spanish king with ecclesiastic displeasure if he continued to permit the synagog to thrive at the expense of the Church. Innocent insisted that the Jews contribute to the clergy a tithe of the estates they bought from Christians so that the clergy whose power depended upon their wealth lose nothing by such transactions. (May, 1207.) The means he employed to coerce the Jews into submission was the indirect ban. As the Jews themselves could not be excommunicated, he threatened to excommunicate every Christian who had any dealings with Jews, and who refused to submit to his apostolic will in general.

A threatening letter addressed by Innocent to the Count of Nevers (Jan., 1208), who was a friend of the Jews, shows even more plainly the pope's deep-seated hatred of the Jews. In this letter the pope says that the Jews must wander without rest upon the earth like Cain, and their faces must be covered with shame. They should not be protected by Christian princes, but, on the contrary, should be condemned to servitude. It is, therefore, disgraceful when Christian princes receive the Jews in their cities and villages, and use them as usurers in order to extort money from the Christians through them,

The princes imprison Christians who refuse to pay their debts to the Jews, permit the Jews to take Christian castles and villages as a pledge, and (what is the real evil) the Church loses its tithes by such a transaction. It is scandalous that Christians turn their cattle over to the Jews to be slaughtered and their grapes to be pressed so that the Jews take for themselves first what they had prepared in accordance with the tenets of their religion, and leave the rest to the Christians. It is a still greater sin that the wine thus prepared by the Jews is used for the sacrament of the Lord's supper in the church. If the Christians are excommunicated by the clergy because of their friendship to the Jews, and their land is interdicted, the Jews only laugh in their sleeves that, because of them, the priests hang their harps upon the willows and lose their revenues while the ban is in force. Innocent was the first pope who was filled with a burning hatred of the Jews, and it was only the futile hope of a final conversion that kept him from declaring a war of extermination upon them as upon the Albigenses.

The pope's hostility to the Jews was prompted by the consciousness that they were the ones who were indirectly agitating against the depravity of Christianity upon which the power of the papacy was founded. The Jews did, in fact, help to arouse the indignation of the truly religious and moral Christians against the presumption, the moral corruption and the insatiable greed of the church prelates. The opposition to the pope on the part of the Albigenses of Southern France who were stigmatized as heretics was due in part to their contact with educated Jews and with Jewish writings. There was one sect among them that frankly stated: "The law of the Jews is preferable to that of the Christians." Innocent therefore directed his attention

both to the Albigenses and to the Jews of Southern France in order to check their influence upon the Catholic Christians. Count Raymond VI of Toulouse and St. Gilles who was regarded as a supporter of the Albigenses was charged by the pope, among other sins, also with the crime of appointing Jews to various offices in his state and of being generally well disposed towards the Jews. For this reason, the Jews also became involved in the bloody crusade which the pope instigated against him and the Albigenses. As soon as Raymond was humiliated, and was forced to submit to being scourged and dragged naked to the church with a rope around his neck by the papal legate Milo, he had to confess, among other things, the crime of having entrusted Jews with public offices, and to take a solemn oath, on pain of the loss of his dignity, to discharge all Jewish officials in his land. The wretched prince, while the keen sword was suspended over his head, was compelled to repeat this declaration frequently (June, 1209). Thirteen other barons who were connected with Raymond and regarded as supporters of the Albigenses were forced by the papal legate Milo to take a similar oath.

Meanwhile, an army of fanatics, incited by the pope and by the blood-thirsty monk Arnold of Citeaux, and led by the self-seeking Count Simon of Montfort, proceeded against the Albigenses, and marched upon Beziers, the capital of Viscount Raymond Roger who was doubly hated by the pope as a secret supporter of the Albigenses and as a friend of the Jews. The beautiful city of Beziers was taken by storm, and a massacre, in the name of God, was instituted among its inhabitants. "We spared neither condition, nor sex, nor age," reports Arnold to the pope; "nearly twenty thousand people were put to the sword; after the great massacre the city was plundered and burned, and the venge-

ance of God raged in the city in a wonderful manner." Even orthodox Catholics were not spared, and, in reply to the question how the heretics were to be distinguished from the faithful, Arnold replied: "Yours it is to kill. God will take care of his own!" Under these circumstances, the flourishing and cultured Jewish community of Beziers could expect even less consideration. Two hundred Jews were murdered, and many were taken captive. The year of the crusade against the Albigenses the Jews, too, designated "the year of sorrow."

Through the diplomatic victory over Raymond of Toulouse and the military victory over Raymond Roger, the intolerant Church gained the upper hand not only in Southern France but throughout Christendom. The audacity of the liberal spirits in forming views of their own on religion, the Bible, or the authority of the clergy was avenged in blood. The pope now had the power, in the ecclesiastical phraseology of that day, to brandish both the spiritual and the temporal sword. Those guilty of rational thoughts were slain; thinking was branded as a crime. The disciples of the religious philosopher Amalarich of Bena who maintained that Rome was the sin-laden Babylon and the pope the anti-Christ were burned in Paris as blasphemers. Philosophic writings brought from Spain to France, among those the religious philosophy of Solomon ibn Gabirol, translated upon the order of an archbishop, were interdicted by the Paris Synod (1209). The faint light that began to dawn upon the European peoples was extinguished by the representatives of the Church. The Jews of Southern France and of Spain were the only priests of the higher knowledge still left, but the Church exerted all of its powers to humiliate them. The Council of Avignon (Sep., 1209), presided over by the papal

legate Milo, decreed that all barons and free cities must take an oath not to entrust Jews with any office whatever, and not to permit them to employ any Christian servant. A canon of this council forbids Jews not only to perform any work publicly on Sundays and Christian holidays, but even to eat meat on Christian fast-days. The Jews, everywhere, felt the heavy hand of the papacy upon them.

In England, the Jews had threefold enemies at this time. The vicious and conscienceless King John Lackland stopped short of no means to extort money from them. The barons who were hostile to John looked upon the Jews as the source of his wealth, and plundered them on every occasion. Cardinal Stephen Langston, forced upon England by the pope as archbishop of Canterbury, transplanted into England the spirit of persecution that animated the Church.

This crushing hostility manifested on all sides, together with the yearning after the Holy Land, which the poet Judah Halevi had inspired, led more than three hundred rabbis of France and England to emigrate to Jerusalem (1211). The best known among them were Jonathan Kohen of Lunel, one of Maimonides' admirers, and Samson ben Abraham, an opponent of Maimonides' teachings. These emigrants were received with honor by the sultan Aladil, Saladin's eneregetic brother, were given certain privileges, established synagogs and academies in Jerusalem, and transplanted to the Orient the ingenious Tosafistic treatment of the Talmud. In the Orient, prominent Jews bearing the title of "exilarch" were still allowed to exercise a shadow of power over the communities; califs and sultans, the representatives of the spiritual and the temporal money. In Europe, on the other hand, their very power, granted them this privilege—at least for

life was threatened day by day by the blind fanaticism of the Church and of the masses.

The Almohade prince Mohammed al-Nasir of Northwestern Africa declared a holy war against the Christians who were steadily gaining ground in Mohammedan Spain, and at least half a million warriors followed him across the Sea into Andalusia. Realizing that even the united strength of all the Christian kings of Spain would be powerless to avert the approaching danger, Alfonso the Noble, king of Castile, appealed to Pope Innocent to proclaim a general crusade against the Crescent, and the Pope gladly acceded to this request. Thereupon, thousands of European warriors crossed the Pyrenees, including the bloodthirsty Cistercian monk Arnold and his band who had rendered the Church such conspicuous services in the cruelties of all kinds they perpetrated upon the Albigenses and the Jews. The "ultramontanists" as they were called in contradistinction to the Spanish soldiers, took exception to the comparatively happy condition of the Jews in the Spanish capital, to their wealth, their freedom and their high standing at court; and, instigated by Arnold, these foreign crusaders made a sudden attack upon the Jews of Toledo, and killed many of them (June, 1212). The community at large might have suffertd a similar fate, had not the noble Alfonso taken their part. The Christian knights and citizens of Toledo, prompted by a sense of honor, likewise defended the Jews, and put a stop to the attacks of the foreign fanatics.

The Church, however, took care that in Spain, too, the kings and the peoples be filled with hatred of the Jews. Innocent III had summoned an ecumenical council to Rome for the purpose of discussing the crusade against the Mohammedans of the Holy Land and of Spain as well as against the

heretics of Southern France, and the reformation of the Church, that is, the ways and means of extending the power of the Church over the states. The communities of Southern France, who were the first to learn that that Council intended to strike a hard blow at the Jews too, trembled with apprehension. Don Zag Benveniste, the Jewish physician of the King of Aragon, therefore invited Jewish deputies to meet in Bourg de St. Gilles for the purpose of selecting an influential and capable deputation to proceed to Rome and endeavor to avert the threatened calamity. Their efforts, however, were futile. The Lateran Council that bound Christian Europe with the ignominious shackles of spiritual slavery, and caused it to revert to barbarism, inflicted deep wounds upon Judaism also.

Of the seventy canonical decrees issued by that Council, four were concerned with the Jews. One canon decreed that Christian princes keep a strict watch that Jews do not take an excessive rate of interest from their Christian debtors. This restriction may be justified to some extent on the ground that the Church held strictly to the letter of the Bible, and paid no attention to the financial needs of the time, though Christian priests and laymen favored and exploited the usury of the Jews, and though Christian associations, like the Lombards, and the Caorsini (also called Ultramontanes), practised usury likewise. The Council in its time was also justified in a measure in forbidding baptized Jews to observe Jewish rites, inasmuch as the Church dared not grant freedom of conscience without self-surrender. The other canon forbidding Jews to appear in public on Easter Day may also be extenuated by the charge, if true, that some Jews were making sport of the Christian processions at Easter time, though ordinary justice would demand that the many be not deprived of their freedom because

of the misconduct of the few. A greater injustice was evinced by the canon compelling every head of a Jewish family to pay to the Church a special annual tax of six deniers on Easter. Quite in the spirit of the Albigenses persecution was the renewal of the canonical decree that no Christian prince entrust any office to a Jew. But the most degrading canon of all was the decree of the Council that Jews in all Christian countries be compelled to wear at all times a garb that was to distinguish them from the Christians. The reason assigned for this cannon was that in some countries where Jews (and Mohammedans) wear the national costume mixed marriages occur between them and Christians. This law was further extenuated by the sophistry that Moses had commanded the Jews to wear a distinctive garb. Hence, every Jew and Jewess from the age of twelve and upward must wear a badge recognizable by a particular color, the men on their hats, the women on their veils.

The Jewish badge is an invention of Pope Innocent III and of the Fourth Ecumenical Roman Council, or rather an imitation from a fanatic Mohammedan ruler, Abu Yusuf Yakub al-Mansur, the Almohade prince of the faithful of Africa and Southern Spain, commanded the Jews of his domain who accepted Islam under compulsion to wear a disfiguring garb, heavy garments with long sleeves, and a veil of hideous form instead of a Turban, with this logical statement: "Were I convinced that the converted Jews accepted Islam sincerely, I would permit them to amalgamate with the Mussulmen by marriage. Were I convinced that they remained unbelievers, I would put their men to the sword, confiscate their property, and sell their children into slavery. But as I am uncertain on either point, let them appear in a hideous, distinctive garb." This barbaric treatment of the Jews Pope

Garments with Badges Worn by Jews in the Middle Ages

Innocent imitated now. The deep degradation of the Jews of Europe that continued for six centuries dates from November 30th, 1215.

Henceforth, provincial councils, diets and ministerial cabinets occupied themselves, alongside of the exclusion of the Jews from every position of honor and trust, with the Jewish badge, to determine its color, form, length and width with pedantic precision. But whether square or round, yellow or another color, whether worn on the hat or on the cloak, the Jewish badge was a challenge for street urchins to make sport of its wearers and bespatter them with mud, was a hint to the brutalized mob to fall upon them, mistreat them or even to kill them, was an opportunity for the upper classes themselves to stigmatize them as outcasts or to expel them from the land. Worse even than this outward degradation was the effect the badge had upon the Jews themselves. They gradually accustomed themselves to their humiliating position, and lost their sense of pride and self-respect. They neglected their external appearance since they were anyway regarded as a despised and disreputable caste. Little by little they neglected their language since they could gain no access to cultured circles, and among themselves a jargon, too, was sufficient. Thus they lost the sense of beauty and of good taste. They lost likewise the bearing and the courage of manliness; mere urchins could frighten them. The prophetic threat of Isaiah was literally fulfilled: "Humiliated thou shalt speak upon the ground. . . and from the dust thy lips shall lisp."

Of course, the Jews did not submit so easily to the wearing of the badge of disgrace. The communities of Spain, and of Southern France in particular, hitherto accustomed to respectful treatment, would not yield to this degradation without a struggle. Eminent Jews, ambassadors to foreign

courts, treasurers of royal revenues (Almoxarifs), physicians to kings and princes, still had some influence at the courts of Toledo and Saragossa, and left no stone unturned to prevent the execution of this decree of degradation. The Jews of Aragon were, in fact, exempted from wearing the badge by Honorius III, the more humane successor of Innocent III, through the efforts of Zag Benveniste, the physician to King James I, who had rendered the king conspicuous services (1220). But friendly as Honorius was on this point, he nevertheless addressed a letter to the king in the same year admonishing him not to entrust Jews with any diplomatic mission to Mohammedan courts for the reason "that those who abhor the Christian faith cannot be loyal to its adherents." In a similar strain he wrote to the prelates of Aragon, Castile, Leon and Navarre to induce the Kings to employ no Jews in any diplomatic capacity whatever because such trust would set a dangerous example for Christendom. How little the pope knew of the unswerving loyalty of the Jews to their sovereigns and of their love for their native land! Far from abusing the confidence reposed in them, the Jewish ambassadors to foreign courts exerted their utmost energies to the advantage of their masters. However, since the time of Innocent III, the humiliation and the degradation of the Jews became a fixed principle of the Church. Though Honorius exempted the Jews of Aragon from wearing the Jewish badge, he refused to grant a similar exemption to the Jews of England. (1221.)

Upon the death of the insane tyrant John Lackland, and during the minority of his son Henry III, the notorious Stephen Langton, appointed Archbishop of Canterbury by Innocent, was the virtual ruler of England. Under his presidency the Council of Oxford (1222) adopted the most stringent

canonical laws to humiliate the Jews. A series of restrictions was imposed upon the English Jews for some enormity committed by them, the nature of which is not stated. Possibly they were held responsible for the conversion of an English deacon to Judaism in the same year. As a matter of course, the renegade was burned at the stake. The Church at that time knew no more effective means of silencing opposition than the blazing fire.

Despite the many exertions of cultured, influential Jews to avert the enforcement of the decree imposing the badge upon the Jews, the edict of the Lateran Council of 1215 found ever greater favor. Even Emperor Frederick II, the enlightened prince whose orthodoxy was more than suspected, had finally to yield to the papacy, and to introduce by law the wearing of the Jewish badge in his hereditary possessions of Naples and Sicily, although he invited Jewish scholars to his court and charged them with the translation of philosophic works from the Arabic into the Latin. The one, however, did not exclude the other.

In southern France where, owing to the war against the Albigenses, the fanaticism of the priesthood became still more intense than in the rest of Christendom, the anti-Jewish edicts of Innocent III found zealous defenders. Even the long-forgotten chicanery of the days of the Merovingian kings were recalled to life and enforced, and when the war of the Albigenses was over, the horrors of a blind, vindictive, bloodthirsty reaction set in. The Dominican friars glorified Christianity by means of torture and the stake. Whoever merely had in his possession a bible in the Provençal language had to answer to the Dominican inquisition. The Franciscan monks worked hand in hand with them. Ere long, the Jews also became entangled in the meshes of the monkish inquisitions, as though

they were responsible for the heresy of the Albigenses.

Four men appeared simultaneously on the stage of history who were determined to render the life of the Jews in various countries a veritable hell upon earth. These were Pope Gregory IX, the mortal enemy of Emperor Frederick II, who destroyed the unity and the greatness of Germany; King Louis IX of France who earned for himself the appellation of Saint, a single-hearted, narrow minded man, who was most eager to assist in the persecution of heretics, and who hated the Jews so thoroughly that the very sight of them was an abomination to him; his contemporary Ferdinand III, of Castile, likewise acknowledged as a saint by the Church because he had burned the heretics with his own hand; and finally Raymond de Peñaforte, the general of the Dominicans, the most rabid persecutor of heretics, who exerted himself to the utmost to convert the Jews and Mohammedans to Christianity. It was to the mercy of such intolerant, relentless, and powerful enemies that the Jews were exposed.

Owing to the widespread power the papacy enjoyed since the days of Innocent, the anti-Jewish policy of the Church reacted also upon the Jews who lived on the shores of the Lower Danube and the Theiss. In Hungary the Jews had settled in early times, having emigrated thither from Byzantium and the Land of the Chazars. Inasmuch as there were many pagans and Mohammedans among the dominant Magyars, the kings of Hungary had to treat them with tolerance. Moreover the profession of Christianity on the part of the Magyars was, at best, only superficial. For this reason, the Jews of Hungary, from the remotest times, had the lease of the national coinage; farmed, together with the Mohammedans, the

salt and the taxes of the state, and held high offices in the government. Marriages between Christians and Jews occurred, since the Church had as yet gained no firm foothold in Hungary. The Church, of course, could not tolerate this favorable position of the Hungarian Jews, and when King Andreas, from whom the nobles of the land wrested a charter of freedom, appealed to Pope Gregory IX for aid, the first condition stipulated by the Pope was the dismissal of Jews and Mohammedans from public offices. Andreas submitted to the papal will at first, but soon disregarded it because the Jewish officials and tax-farmers were indispensable to him. For this as well as for other offences, the archbishop of Gran, upon the order of the Pope, excommunicated the king and his partisans. Exposed to torments of all sorts, Andreas finally yielded, and was forced to take a solemn oath (1282) to appoint no longer Jews or Saracens to any public offices, not to permit them to own Christian serfs, to tolerate no intermarriages and to compel the Jews to wear the badge. The crown prince Bela, the king of Slavonia, all the magnates and the dignitaries of the kingdom had to take a similar oath upon the order of the papal legate.

As troubles seldom come singly, the misfortune of the external degradation of the Jews was augmented by an internal division and enfeeblement. Strangely enough, this rupture became associated with the name of Maimonides, the man who devoted his entire life to unity and conclusiveness of Jewry and Judaism. Still, in attempting to interpret the doctrines of Judaism philosophically, he laid down principles that were by no means in harmony with the Bible, and still less so with the Talmud. The strict Talmudists, therefore, refused to have anything to do with a philosophic interpretation of Judaism, looked upon scientific studies,

even when applied to the service of Judaism, as a sin, quoting correctly or erroneously the Talmudic maxim: "Keep your children from philosophizing." Even thinking men regretted that Maimonides, in his endeavor to reconcile religion with the philosophy of the age, subordinated the former to the latter. Maimonides treated miracles lightly and sought to explain them away by natural processes; prophecy as a direct contact with God he did not entertain at all, but explained it as a psychic experience, as the effect of an overwrought imagination, or as a dream-vision; his doctrine of immortality was likewise in opposition to the belief of Talmudic Judaism, inasmuch as it denies the existence of a paradise and of a hell, and makes the purified spirits return to their original source, and become at one with God. His views on many ritual laws excited particular opposition because, by his explanation of them they lose their permanent value and have only a temporary significance. His treatment of the Haggadah, an integral part of the Talmud, to which he gave a new interpretation or which he ignored completely when it appeared to him too coarse, was regarded by the strict Talmudists as arrant heresy. Thus, alongside of his worshipping admirers who regarded his philosophy as a new revelation, an opposition party was formed that decried his writings, especially his "Guide of the Perplexed" and the first part of his religious code. The rabbis and, in general, the representative men of the Jewish communities of Asia and Europe thus became divided into Maimonists and anti-Maimonists. The latter, as contemporaries still under the influence of his personality and activity, did full justice to Maimonides himself and to his piety but condemned his views and the books that contained them.

The opposition to his philosophic views mani-

fested itself even during Maimonides' lifetime, but it was tacit and timid, and dared not speak out in the presence of the enthusiasm of his admirers. A young scholar, Meir ben Todros Halevi Abulafia of Toledo (1244), a zealot like a Dominican inquisitor, gave expression to his religious scruples about the theories of Maimonides in a letter addressed to the sages of Lunel which was certain to gain publicity, but his letter made no impression. He was roughly rebuffed by Aaron ben Meshullam of Lunel, a man of culture and of Talmudic learning, and an enthusiastic admirer of Maimonides, and, as it seems, in the name of many similarly minded associates. Only the Talmudists of Northern France, who found the purest truth in every letter of the Talmud, with Samson of Sens at their head, a keen Tosafist, but an intolerant enemy of philosophy, heartily agreed with Meir Abulafia. The Maimonists who were far superior to their opponents in knowledge and in literary skill, hurled witty epigrams at the obscurantists, and gained popular support.

In Southern France and in Spain the ideas of Maimonides gained exceptional ground and dominated the men of knowledge and most of the leaders of the communities. The pious among them sought as much as they could to reconcile the differences between Talmudic Judaism and the Maimonidean system. The less orthodox looked upon his views as a pretext for their lukewarmness in the observance of religious laws, disregarded many ritual laws in practice, and were about to create a rational Judaism of their own. The indifference towards the law on the part of the Jewish-Spanish communities went so far that intermarriages with Christians and Mohammedans were of frequent occurrence. The strictly orthodox regarded this phenomenon as the poisoned fruit of the philosophic

seed and prophesied the destruction of Judaism if the views of Maimonides ever gained the upper hand. For a long time, nevertheless, none besides Meir Abulafia ventured to attack the works of Maimonides.

It was therefore regarded as an act of boldness when an orthodox rabbi declared war upon the Maimonists openly and recklessly. This rabbi was Solomon ben Abraham of Montpellier, a pious, honest but onesided man, whose world was circumscribed by the Talmud. He and his associates held an anthropomorphic conception of God after the manner of the Haggadah; of a God who has eyes, ears and other human organs, who sits in heaven upon a lofty throne, surrounded by darkness and clouds; believed implicitly in the paradise and hell described in the Haggadah; and held firmly to the existence of evil spirits, regarding it almost as an article of faith since the Talmudic Haggadah recognized their existence. Holding such views, Solomon of Montpellier must have considered nearly every word in the writings of Maimonides un-Jewish and heretical, and he determined to declare war upon ideas, that, from his point of view, threatened the dissolution of Judaism, and upon their adherents. As Medievalism knew of no more effective means of destroying thoughts that appeared pernicious than excommunication, Solomon determined to employ that as his weapon. The idea of suppressing the Maimonistic heresy by means of excommunication may have been suggested to him by the example of Pope Gregory IX who threatened to excommunicate the professors of the University of Paris, the representative of the free, philosophic spirit up to the rise of the Dominicans and the Franciscans, if they ventured to make use of philosophic works interdicted by the Lateran Council. Solomon could find no allies among the rabbis of Southern France,

outside of his two disciples, Jona ben Abraham Gerundi of Gerona, and David ben Saul; and these three issued a decree of excommunication against all who read the writings of Maimonides, particularly the philosophic chapters, who occupy themselves with any branch of knowledge outside of the Bible and the Talmud, who give a new interpretation to the simple, literal sense of the Scriptures, and who, in general, explain the Scriptures differently from Rashi. The rabbi of Montpellier intended, from the beginning, to appeal to the Christian authorities, in case of necessity, for assistance in supressing the liberal spirit of the Maimonists; for the present, however, he sought the support of the rabbis of Northern France. The latter, belonging to the ingenious but onesided school of the Tosafists, and grown gray in the service of the Talmud, joined in the excommunication, and took sides against the Maimonists. But the act of excommunication, this prescription of knowledge, this disparagement of Maimonides, aroused the violent anger of the Maimonists, and the three leading communities of Provence, Lunel, Beziers and Narbonne, wherein the Maimonists predominated, rose against this presumption of the obscurantists, excommunicated Solomon and his two disciples in their turn, and hastened to appeal to the other communities of Provence to join them in vindicating the honor of the great Moses. In Montpellier itself, the community was split into two factions; while the ignorant masses sided with their rabbis, the educated men refused them obedience, and the quarrels led to blows also. The flames of dissension rose higher and higher and spread through Provence, Catalonia, Aragon and Castile. The quarrel raged on both sides with equal passion, and neither party was particularly scrupulous in the weapons it employed. The worst of it

all was that both factions were within their rights; but could invoke ancient and acknowledged authorities, the one to prove that the Bible and the Talmud must be accepted on faith without undue subtilizing, the other that reason also has a place in things religious.

Two men famous in Jewish literature participated in this struggle; the aged David Kimhi and the young Moses Nahmani. The former, an old man, and at the height of his fame as a Hebrew philologist and Bible commentator, was an ardent admirer of Maimonides. For this reason, he was suspected by the obscurantists and the rabbis of Northern France excommunicated him in particular, because, in his commentary, he interpreted Ezekiel's vision of the throne of God in a philosophic-Maimonidean sense, and because he maintained that in the Messianic era the Talmudic controversies would lose their meaning; in other words, that the Talmud, generally speaking, had no enduring value. Kimhi, therefore, embraced the cause of Maimonides all the more ardently, since in defending Maimonides he simultaneously defended himself. Old and feeble as he was, he undertook a journey to Spain to induce the Spanish communities to join the Provençals against Solomon of Montpellier. The second leading personality in this conflict was the youthful Bonastruc de Porta, or Moses Nahmani (Nahmanides), as he is called in Jewish literature (about 1195-1270), who was a pronounced character with all the strength and weakness of such. A man of moral purity and conscientious religiosity, kind of heart and keen of intellect, a physician acquainted with the natural sciences and otherwise cultured and familiar with philosophic literature, he was nevertheless a thorough believer in authority. The "wisdom of the ancients" appeared to him unsurpassed and unsurpassable, and their ut-

terances above criticism. Not only the entire compass of the Scriptures and the entire range of the Talmud, but also the geonim and their immediate disciples Nahmanides regarded as infallible authorities. Within the Talmudic-rabbinic sphere his judgment is correct and keen; but he cannot step beyond that sphere, or, in general, raise himself to a liberal point of view. The Talmud was the all in all to him, and in its light he judged the universe, the events of the past and the unfoldment of the future. He had but few points of contact with Maimonides. If the latter regarded Judaism as a cult of reason, Nahmanides regarded it as a religion of feeling. For Maimonides there was no mystery in Judaism that could not be elucidated by reason; for Nahmanides it was just the mysteries that were the supremely sacred element of Judaism. The contrast between their habits of thought is best characterized by their respective attitude towards the belief in demons. Maimonides regarded it not merely a superstition but veritable paganism to ascribe power to evil spirits. Nahmanides on the other hand, believed in it firmly.

But though Nahmanides combated the philosophy of his time, as contradictory to the revelation of Judaism, and condemned Aristotle as the arch heretic, he was nevertheless averse to blind faith and to the exclusion of every rational conception in things religious. In this respect he differed widely from the rabbis of Northern France whose strictly Talmudic tendency he followed otherwise. On this point, however, he came in conflict with himself. To believe literally in the crude, anthropomorphic expressions of the Talmud with reference to God was against his philosophic sense; to disbelieve in them would be a denial of authority; to give them a new interpretation would be a concession to the Maimonidean tendency. From this

embarrassment he was relieved by the appearance of a new mystic theosophy that insinuated itself in Judaism as an original divine tradition, as Cabala. By means of this mystic teaching, whatever in its literal meaning appeared at first blush blasphemous or, at least, senseless and puerile, assumed to him a profound, mysterious, transcendent meaning. Nahmanides thus embraced this cabalistic falsity, and became not only its partisan but its mainstay.

At the time when the ban was pronounced upon the philosophic writings of Maimonides, Nahmanides was still a young man, but was already held in such high esteem that even the haughty Meir Abulafia yielded him recognition. As rabbi of the community of Gerona, he could sway his community to the one or the other side, and he decided to support his friend Solomon, and his kinsman Jonah. As soon as he learned that the Provençal communities excommunicated his friends, he hastened, without investigating the merits of the case, to address letters to the communities of Aragon, Navarre, and Castile in which he urged upon them not to pay any heed to the "hypocritical, false" Maimonists. Nahmanides expresses regret at the schism threatening the unity of Judaism that had been preserved from time immemorial in all the lands of their dispersion, and he counsels discretion and calm deliberation. But he himself embraces the cause of the obscurantists: "If the French teachers from whose fountains we drink darken the sunlight by day and obscure the moon they must not be contradicted." But most of the Spanish communities refused to be led into darkness. Saragossa, the chief community of Aragon, and its leader, Bahiel ibn Alconstantini, the physician and favorite of King James, declared themselves resolutely for Maimonides, and confirmed the excommunication of Solomon and his two associates. Bahiel, his brother Solomon and

ten other representative men addressed a letter to the communities of Aragon (Aug., 1232) calling upon them to make common cause against those "who had dared to rise against the greatness of Maimonides who had saved us from the floods of ignorance, error and folly." It is a religious duty of Judaism to acquire general knowledge while "three perverters appear and seduce the people, disparage the fair name of the great Maimonides, aim at leading the communities into darkness, and forbid the reading of his philosophical writings and the study of science in general." Bahiel as the most influential man in Aragon, wrote a personal letter in addition urging upon the communities to take a decisive stand against those "who do not believe in God and his servant Moses ben Maimon." As a result, the five large communities of Aragon, Huesca, Monzon, Calatajud and Lerida, joined forces with the community of Saragossa.

Both the Maimonists and their opponents awaited anxiously the decision of the community of Toledo, the largest, wealthiest, most influential and cultured community of Spain that might turn the scale one way or the other. The head of this community was Judah ben Joseph ibn Alfakar, presumably the physician of King Frederick III; but he remained neutral at first. However, Meir Halevi Abulafia, the old antagonist of Maimonides, raised his voice loudly. In replying to the letter of Nahmanides and of the community of Gerona, he assured them that he and his friends would pay no heed to the "Provençal violators of the Law." He admits that many members of the Toledo community are in love with the philosophic works of Maimonides, and that he is not in a position to change their views; but should the Maimonidists gain the upper hand, he declares himself ready to withdraw from the community entirely.

The Maimonists, however, were more energetic than their opponents. They used every effort on the one hand to induce the rabbis of Northern France to withhold their support from Solomon of Montpellier, and, on the other hand, to win the community of Toledo to their side. In consequence of their efforts, the former, while refusing to accept the Maimonidean theories, agreed to remain neutral. Nahmanides was indignant at this change of front on the part of the French rabbis, and, in a letter addressed to them, he proposed a compromise to the effect that the interdict upon the philosophic portion of Maimonides' religious code be removed, but that upon the "Guide" be reaffirmed with the approbation of the Provençal rabbis and even with that of Maimonides' own son, Abraham Abulmeni. Nahmanides, however, failed to realize that the two maligned works of Maimonides were of one cast, and that it was therefore impossible to condemn the one and to canonize the other. He erred, too, in thinking that it was possible to put a stop to free, philosophic inquiry. The two tendencies, equally justified, must combat each other until the one or the other carries the day; vital, fundamental questions cannot be settled by a mere compromise. The contestants, therefore, continued the struggle without paying the least consideration to Nahmanides' proposal. The longer the conflict continued the greater the irritation it produced, and the larger the number that participated in it.

The aged David Kimhi, on his way to Toledo to induce that important community to embrace the cause of the Maimonists, fell seriously sick, and was compelled to abandon his journey. From his sick bed, however, he addressed a letter to Judah ibn Alfakar, the leader of the Toledo community, in which he censured him for his stubborn silence in a matter that had so deeply stirred the French

communities, and urged upon him to induce his community to make common cause with the Maimonists. But Judah Alfakar was at heart a decided anti-Maimonist. He was a thinker of greater penetration than Nahmanides. He saw clearly the weakness of the Maimonidean system, but he also labored under the delusion that the philosophic spirit can be exorcised by anathemas. Alfakar respected the excommunication of the French rabbis so highly that he would not at first reply to Kimhi's letter at all; and when he finally decided to do so, he treated Kimhi in such a disparaging manner that it staggered the Maimonists who had expected support from Toledo.

But the sympathy of Alfakar, Nahmanides and Meir Abulafia for Solomon of Montpellier had little effect upon the subject of the controversy. Public opinion in his own home and in Spain was against Solomon. The French rabbis upon whose assistance he had counted most, withdrew one by one from a controversy the significance of which they were beginning to recognize, and which threatened to involve in danger those who participated in it. Thus abandoned on all sides, and violently attacked in his own community, Solomon of Montpellier decided to take a step that led to tragic consequences not only for his own party but also for all Jewry.

Pope Gregory IX who was bent upon exterminating the rest of the Albigenses root and branch had just then (April, 1233) established a permanent inquisition and appointed the rabid Franciscan monks as inquisitors, because the bishop who had hitherto had charge of the persecution of the Albigenses did not appear to him severe enough. In all the larger cities of Southern France where Dominican cloisters existed, including Montpellier, tribunals arose that condemned to perpetual imprisonment, or

to the stake, heretics, or those only suspected of heresy, and often even entirely innocent people. And it was with these fellows that Solomon, the rabbi, the defender of the Talmud, formed an alliance; his cause was to carry the day by means of the inquisition. He and his disciple Jonah said to the Dominicans: "You burn your heretics, persecute ours also. Most of the Jews of Provence are seduced by the heretical writing of Maimonides. If you were to burn these books publicly and solemnly that act would serve as a warning to the Jews to keep away from them." They also read to the inquisitors insidious passages from the writings of Maimonides that filled the fanatical monks with holy horror. The Dominicans did not have to be asked twice to perform such a service. The papal cardinal-legate who was animated by the same fanatic zeal as Gregory IX readily gave his consent. The Dominicans may have been actuated by the fear that the flames of the Maimonideans' heresy might set their own house on fire. In the first half of the thirteenth century, the "Guide" had already been translated into Latin at the instance of Emperor Frederick II; and Maimonides with his religious philosophy might therefore justly appear worthy of condemnation in the eyes of the guardians of Catholic orthodoxy. To *think* about religion was then generally regarded as a mortal sin by official Christianity. Had the power of the inquisitors already at that time extended over the persons of the Jews, the Maimonists would have fared badly; as it was, the persecutions were confined to parchment. In Montpellier and in Paris, the inquisitors searched the Jewish houses for copies of Maimonides' works, and burned them publicly. The enemies of Judaism rejoiced at this schism which, to them, presaged the decay of Judaism. The anti-Maimonists, seeing that the Church was ready to assist them, preferred

false charges against their opponents before the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and exposed many Jews of Montpellier to imminent danger.

These occurrences justly excited the horror of all Jews this and that side of the Pyrenees, and Solomon and his partisans were condemned on all sides. The leaders in Spain and in Provence were indignant at this treason. They regarded the calling in of the Dominicans as judges to decide what is and what is not Jewish as equivalent to admitting the heathen enemy into the sanctum sanctorum of the Temple. Kimhi, who, on his return journey, received the news at Burgos, asked Alfakar whether he was still willing to take the informer Solomon under his protection. Nahmanides and Abulafia hung their heads in shame and held their peace. In public opinion, Solomon and the cause he represented were execrated. A Maimonistic poet wrote a fine epigram on that occasion:

"What say ye arrogant knaves and fools purblind,
The precious books were to the flames consigned?
An all consuming fire, and words that burn,
How can they be by flames consumed in turn?
Elijah-like their way they skyward wended,
And angel-like amidst the flames ascended."

The denunciation in Montpellier by means of false witnesses to which the Maimonists were subjected were stopped by some secret, unknown influences. More than ten of the informers, Solomon's partisans, were punished by having their tougues cut out. These dismal events are wrapped in the mists of obscurity, and but little light can be shed upon them. Solomon's attempt to curb by force the free spirit of inquiry in the religious domain was frustrated and ended wretchedly. Jona Gerondi himself, the most zealous anti-Maimonist, repented of his share in the wretched affair, and vowed to make a pilgrimage to Maimonides'

grave in Tiberias, and there publicly to beg forgiveness of his shade for the injury done to him. In Barcelona, at the instance of Abraham ben Hasdai, philosopher and poet, the community adopted the custom of reading a selected passage from Maimonides' "Guide" every Sabbath.

The excitement created in the communities by the war of the parties was finally allayed by Moses of Coucy, a rabbi of Northern France, gentle and meek, a Talmudic authority, a Tosafist, but nevertheless a great admirer of Maimonides, who undertook to banish the discord, and to reawaken the religious enthusiasm of the indifferent of Provence and of Spain by means of fervent sermons and exhortations. Moses of Coucy was undoubtedly led to this attempt by the example of the friars who sought to overcome, and partly succeeded, the indifference to the Catholic Church by circuit preaching from place to place. The rabbi of Coucy likewise made a circuit of the communities of Southern France and Spain (1235) and was therefore called "the preacher." But what a difference between the rabbi and the Catholic friars! The former entered upon his mission with singlness of heart, free from all selfish ambition, with gentleness on his lips and kindness in his heart. The Dominicans, on the other hand, only made a show of their humility and poverty behind which they hid their pride and arrogance; they flattered the faithful in their sermons, and mercilessly flayed their opponents. Moses of Coucy succeeded in leading many thousands to repentance, and to win them back to the practice of the rites which they had either slighted or ignored completely. In Spain he induced those who had contracted marriages with Christian or Mohammedan women to separate from their non-Jewish wives (1236). It is true, though, that these sudden conversions were due not solely to his

preaching but partly also to the superstitious fears of evil dreams and of unusual celestial phenomena that attacked both Jews and Christians at that time. But Moses of Coucy preached not merely the observance of rituals but impressed upon his hearers also the duties of integrity and of truthfulness in their contact with Christians, and the ideal of humility. Far from arousing the zeal of fanaticism, he emphasized the necessity of peaceableness and tolerance. The sermons of Moses of Coucy had a pacifying influence upon the communities because he openly acknowledged the greatness of Maimonides and placed him on an equality with the geonim. But this controversy over the attitude of Judaism towards philosophic inquiry led to other evil consequences that affected Judaism for centuries and that have not been eradicated to this day.

The schism and the general excitement produced by the strife between the Maimonists and the anti-Maimonists made it possible for an upstart doctrine to insinuate itself into Judaism and to engender further dissensions and strife. The rise of this mysticism, quite recent, un-Jewish and based upon delusions, but claiming for itself the utmost antiquity and the possession of the sole truth, and styling itself Cabala (tradition) synchronized with the quarrel between the Maimonists and their opponents. The Cabala is a child of that schism, and first saw the light of day in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. The Cabala is unable to assign an earlier date for its origin. The earliest Cabalists trace it to Isaac the Blind, or at most, to his father Abraham ben David of Posquières, Maimonides' Talmudic critic, and openly admitted that the Cabalistic teaching was based "neither on the Pentateuch nor on the Prophets, nor on the Hagiographa, nor on the Talmud, but on hardly perceptible allusions." Of Isaac the

Blind, the father of the Cabala, little is known (flourished about 1190-1210) except that he believed in Metempsychosis, a doctrine so repugnant to Jewish thinkers. His disciples said of him that he was able to tell on meeting a person whether his soul was new, fresh from the heavenly chambers, or old, wandering from body to body and still in need of purification. The first to reduce the Cabala to a coherent system, as it were, were his disciples Azriel and Ezra, both of Gerona, who are always mentioned together, and were possibly brothers. The chronicles interchange their names at times, and ascribe certain doctrines and writings now to the one and now to the other. For this reason, they are regarded as a single person in the history of the origin of the Cabala.

The life of these two men is shrouded in obscurity. One of them (it is not known whether Ezra or Azriel) is said to have died at an advanced age a few years after the outbreak of the schism (1238). Neither of them was honest, since they both ascribed one or more of their compilations to older authorities in order to stamp their doctrines with the seal of antiquity. Azriel tells that, from his youth on, he wandered from place to place in search of secret wisdom that was to furnish him with a satisfactory solution of the problem of God and creation, until he discovered it in the possession of men who had received it by tradition, and he became convinced of its truth. This cabalistic doctrine he developed in the course of his wanderings from community to community, but was ridiculed for it by the philosophically cultured Jews of Spain (Seville ?).

One of the earliest mystics thus confesses that the Cabala met with opposition on its very first appearance, and that its teachings were by no means acknowledged as ancient. Azriel attempted

to convince the men of philosophic training of the truths of the Cabala, and employed the language of logic. It is certain, though, that the Cabala, in its beginning, was a protest against the superficial philosophy of the Maimonists. The idea that Judaism aims at nothing further than the teaching of Aristotelian philosophy was an abomination to those who regarded every word of the Bible and of the Talmud as divine truth, and the alternative for them was to ignore entirely all philosophic speculations about God and Judaism, and to accept everything in naive faith. This alternative was adopted by the rabbis of Germany and of Northern France; it was the strictly Tosafistic tendency. But the pious Jews of Southern France and of Spain who had moved to some extent in a philosophic atmosphere could not rest content with that literalism. Judaism appeared meaningless to them unless it be pervaded by a deep, philosophic thought; the ritualistic laws must have a higher, ideal meaning throughout. Even the anti-Maimonists accepted the Maimonidean principle that the legal prescriptions of Judaism are to be regarded not as the arbitrary commands of a despot, as the Talmud designates them in part, but rather as divine ordinances that rest upon a rational basis. And just as the apparently meaningless biblical ordinances and the obscure biblical passages contain a higher meaning, so must the Talmudic Haggadah have a deeper sense or it would be meaningless. But what is this higher meaning that attaches to the entire domain of Judaism? This embarrassment gave birth to the Cabala. The mysticism first developed by Ezra and Azriel presents a peculiar theosophy that proceeds from incomprehensibility to incomprehensibility and finally loses itself in the regions of mist where all thought ceases and where even the pinions of imagination

must droop. Starting from an hypothesis which all the thinkers of that time accepted unconditionally, it deduces from it conclusions that reverse their basic principle. Unity is transformed into plurality, the spiritual into the palpable, pure faith into wretched superstition.

The original Cabala sets up the following doctrines: "The deity is exalted above all, even above being and thought; neither speech, nor action, nor even thought, volition or design may be ascribed to it. All these attributes imply limitation, whereas the deity is unlimited on all sides because perfect. Sinlessness and absoluteness are the only attributes that may be abscribed to it. The Cabala, therefore, applies to God the designation of the Endless (En Sof). This is its first innovation. In this incomprehensible universality of his, God or the En-Sof is unknowable, hidden, cryptic and, accordingly, in a measure, non-existent, since what is inconceivable to the mind does not exist for it. In order, however, to announce its existence, the deity had or wished to reveal itself and to make itself knowable; had to be active and creative in order that its existence might be perceived. But the En-Sof could not have produced or created the sublunar world with its defects and frailties, since the infinite and the perfect cannot directly produce the limited and the imperfect. The deity, therefore, must not be regarded as the immediate creator of the universe. The En-Sof, out of his infinite light, emitted from himself a spiritual substance or force that, emanating immediately from himself, shares in his perfection and infinity. On the other hand, this emanation from the En-Sof could not be the equal of its author in every respect, for it is not primary, but derivative. This emanation therefore is not like but similar to the En-Sof; that is, alongside of its infinite side it has a finite side, too. This

first emanation from the En-Sof, the Cabala calls the First Sefira. From this first spiritual force there emanated a second and from the second a third, so that the deity revealed itself or acted altogether through ten spiritual substances, or forces, or mediate beings, or organs as they are vaguely and variously designated. These ten forces called by the Cabala the Ten Sefirot (Spheres) form an absolute unity among one another and with the En-Sof, and only present different aspects (faces) of one and the same essence just as fire produces at the same time flame, light and sparks that strike the eye as different things and yet signify one and the same thing. The Ten Sefirot that differ from one another like the various shades of one light are limited in force, and can act infinitely only in so far as they receive infinite power from the En-Sof. The number ten, the number of the Sefirot, plays an important and arbitrary part in the Cabala.

By means of these Sefirot God can make himself visible and even assume corporality. The anthropomorphic expressions of the Scriptures refer not to the En-Sof, as the literalists believe, but to the Sefirot. The "sweet savor" of the sacrifice of which the Scriptures speak is inhaled not by the deity but by the Sefirot. In this way the Cabala finds the solution of the difficulties between the conception of a purely spiritual God and the biblical anthropomorphism. The deity is, by all means, incorporeal and infinite, and cannot be conceived of in terms of corporality; but the Sefirot, having finite, in a measure, corporeal sides also, can exercise corporeal functions too, and can come in contact with the material. The creative theory of the Cabala is as fantastic as its conception of the deity. God, or the En-Sof, created the visible world not directly but indirectly by means of the Sefirot.

Everything in the sublunar world, not only the species but the individual also, has its counterpart (type) in the higher world; nothing below is unimportant, but everything has a higher significance.

The universe may be compared to a gigantic tree, rich in branches and foliage, the roots of which are the spiritual world of the Sefirot; or to a closely concatenated chain the last ring of which hangs on the upper world; or to a great sea ever filled by an eternally self-filling source. The human soul, in particular, emanating from the higher world, can come in direct contact with all the Sefirot, and can react upon them and even upon the deity. By virtue of its religious and moral conduct, the soul can either facilitate or hinder the higher light, the blessings that emanate from the deity through mediate beings or canals. By its good conduct, the soul opens these canals of blessings; by its evil conduct it stops them.

The people of Israel were chosen particularly for the purpose of attracting those blessings, and thus to preserve the universe. They received the revelation and the Law with its six hundred and thirteen commandments that, by their ritualistic activity and functions, they might influence the upper world, and compel it, as it were, to pour its blessings upon the lower world. The ritualistic laws have thus a deeply mystic significance and a permanent value, for they are the magic means by which the universe is preserved and receives its blessings: "The truly righteous man is the foundation of the universe." The temple and the sacrificial cult had a particularly important significance; to preserve the vital connection of the lower world with the upper world. The terrestrial temple corresponded to the celestial one of the Sefirot. The priestly benedictions, that used to be pronounced with the ten fingers upraised, stimulated the ten Sefirot to pour their bless-

ings upon the lower world. Upon the fall of the temple, prayer took its place, and therefore has a particularly mystic importance. The prescribed prayers have a never failing effect if the person who prays knows to what particular Sefira to address himself on this or that occasion; for prayers are to be directed to the Sefirot and not to the deity directly. The mystery of prayer occupies an important place in the Cabala. Each word, each syllable of the prayer-book, each motion of the body and each ritualistic symbol employed during prayer is connected by the Cabala with some event in the upper world. The Cabalists devoted themselves especially to the mystic explanation of the ritual laws of Judaism. This was the very pith of their theory, and supplied them with a weapon against the Maimonists. While the latter, from their philosophic point of view, attached no importance to some ordinances of Judaism, the mystics from their point of view, attached the utmost importance to every prescription of Judaism. They were therefore regarded as the preservers of Judaism.

The views held by the Cabala on the important questions of reward and punishment and of the immortality of the soul which Maimonides emphasized as an integral part of Judaism, views for which it naturally claims great antiquity, are of recent origin, and borrowed from an Eastern source. Starting with the assumption that all souls had been created from time immemorial, and are kept in the spiritual world, the Cabala teaches that all souls are destined to enter upon a terrestial life, to enter into a body and to remain with it for a certain length of time. It is the destiny of the soul to be subjected to the proof, while in its house of clay, whether it can preserve its purity from earthly dross despite its connection with the body. If it succeeds in doing that, it ascends after death to

the spiritual kingdom, and becomes a part of the world of the Sefirot. But if it becomes stained in its contact with the body then it must wander back again and repeatedly (but not more than three times at most) into a body until it is able to ascend, purified by repeated trials. Upon this metempsychosis the Cabala bases its doctrines of reward and punishment. The sufferings to which the righteous are subjected here below undeservedly, to all appearances, are solely for the purpose of purifying the soul. Divine justice is therefore not at fault when in this life the just fare badly and the unjust well. Inasmuch as most souls lose their purity in the course of their earthly existence, forget their celestial origin, and are therefore subjected to frequent migrations into new bodies, it is mostly old souls; that is, such as had at least once before descended upon the earth, that come into the world. New souls are born very rarely. The sinfulness of man, the consequence of which is that the same soul must ever enter into new bodies again, detains the great redemption; since the new souls are prevented from coming into the world because it is generally peopled by old souls, and since the great age of Mercy cannot begin before the created souls are born upon the earth. Moreover, the soul of the Messiah that is preserved in the spiritual world of the Sefirot, like the other souls, cannot appear before all the souls had entered into the life of the body. His soul is the last, and the Messiah can thus appear only at the end of days. That period will be the year of the great jubilee when all souls, in all their purity, will return from the earth to their original home in heaven. Man, by his conduct, can thus either hasten or retard that glorious period of the great redemption of the souls. What importance therefore attaches to the adepts of the Cabala! They

have to answer not only for Israel but for the entire order of the universe, since by their actions they have the power to hasten the birth of the Messiah's soul, the last of all the souls kept in the heavenly receptacle.

The Cabala could boast of disclosing the mysteries of Judaism, and its relation to the upper world and to the future unfoldment of things in a far greater measure than the religious philosophy of Maimonides could do; and what a wide scope the Cabala offered for biblical interpretations, or rather, misinterpretations! In the distortion of the Scriptures the Cabala surpassed by far the Alexandrian allegorists, the Agadists, the scholastics and all the Jewish and Christian theologians. Azriel at least ogled at philosophy, and sought to render the Cabala acceptable by the thinkers. But another Cabalist of this time, Jacob ben Sheshet Gerundi of Gerona (about 1243 or 46) stated explicity that the Cabala was the very antithesis of philosophy. He refused to have any dealings with the philosophers, and could not find invectives enough for the philosophic heretics and scorners of the law.

To strengthen the claim of the Cabala upon antiquity, Azriel and Ezra committed the fraud of ascribing the authorship of a mystic book written by themselves to the Talmudic authority, Nehunia ben ha-Kana. This book was circulated under the pompous title of "Splendor" (Bahir), and so cleverly was this forgery smuggled in that even discreet rabbis accepted it as a genuine, ancient production, and paid credence to its lies. In vain did Meir ben Simon of Narbonne, a man of high standing, expose this forgery; in vain did he warn the communities with the consent of Meshullam ben Moses, the rabbi of Beziers, distinguished for his piety and Talmudic knowledge, not to be de-

ceived by this forgery or by any other writings of Azriel and Ezra, but rather to destroy them as teeming with heresies. The "Book of Splendor" was cherished by the Cabalists, and served later Cabalists as proof of the antiquity of the Cabala, while the protest raised by Meir ben Simon was forgotten. Gerona, the home of Ezra, Azriel, Jacob ben Sheshet and Nahmanides, was the first warm nest of the Cabala before it was full-fledged.

The mystic wisdom rests upon nothing else than delusion, at least upon the self-delusion of its originators. Its theory is not ancient, as it claimed, but very young; or, if old, it does not date from Jewish antiquity but from the twilight of Greek philosophy. The Cabala is a caricature that distorts the Jewish and the philosophic ideas in an equal degree. The efforts of Ezra and Azriel in behalf of the Cabala might have met with but little success had not Nahmanides joined their standard. Nahmanides, too, believed in the great antiquity of the Cabalistic book Bahir, and found in it the corroboration of the teachings of the Gerona mystics. At first blush it is, indeed, difficult to understand how this lucid and keen thinker who was able to shed so much light upon every obscurity of the Talmud could follow the aberrations of the Cabala and become its adherent. It is very likely, though, that the emotional Nahmanides, repelled by the dry logic of Maimonides' philosophy, was attracted by the Cabala that nourished and confirmed the faith in miracles and authority that was part of his nature. At any rate, the fact that Nahmanides, a pious rabbi and a profound Talmudic scholar, acknowledged the truth of the Cabala, gained the respect of the masses for the new mystic teachings. If Nahmanides believed absolutely no one dared doubt. Nahmanides thus became the mainstay of the Cabala, and particularly so because he

spoke of it casually, concealing it more than revealing.

Thus, hardly four decades after the death of Maimonides, Jewry was divided into three distinct parties: the philosophically educated, the strict Talmudists and the Cabalists. The first, who took Maimonides as their guide, constructed a rational Judaism, either stopped at his conclusions or drew from his premises still bolder deductions which either escaped him or he would not touch upon, and treated the Talmud indifferently. The strict Talmudists would have nothing to do with Talmudic speculations, accepted the Haggada literally, and held aloof from the Cabala, too. The Cabalists, finally, entertained a prejudice against both, the Talmudic literalists and the enlightened Maimonists; but because they were numerically weak at first, and were as yet unconscious of the conflict of their deductions with Judaism, they assumed a friendly attitude towards the strict Talmudists, and, together with the latter, attacked the common enemy, the Maimonists. However, before a century passed a violent dissension broke out between the Cabalists and the Talmudists.

The evil consequences resulting from the degradation of the Jews by the papacy on the one hand, and from the internal dissensions on the other, soon made themselves felt. The sense of gladness, the joyous impulse that yielded such fine fruit vanished for a long time. A gloomy seriousness settled even upon the Spanish and the Provencal Jews that weighed upon their aspirations like lead. The many singers disappeared all of a sudden, as though the icy breath of the gloomy present had suddenly frozen their warm blood. How could the Jew sing merrily with the badge of disgrace upon his breast! The neo-Hebraic poetry that yielded such sweet melody for three centuries was hushed

and died. The satires and the epigrams that the Maimonists and their opponents hurled at one another were the last products of the neo-Hebraic-Spanish muse. But even these laugh and giggle no longer, but argue and quarrel. They resemble not young, prattling girls, as the epigrams of the golden age did, but rather quarrelsome old women. They present a wrinkled, care-worn face. The best poets themselves felt that the vigor of the neo-Hebraic poetry was exhausted and fed only upon the reminiscences of the golden age.

The last representatives of the neo-Hebraic poetry at this period were Judah al-Harizi (1190-1240), the frivolous rhetorician, skilled translator and ardent partisan of Maimonides, Joseph ben Zabara and Judah ibn Shabbethai. All three employ the form of satiric fiction; and their lines contain more affected wit than art. Harizi, in his tale Tahkemoni, under the disguise of Heber the Kenite and in his dialog with the poet, presents his views upon life, now humorous, now serious, in rimed prose alternating with verse, and narrates brief episodes. The poet Joseph ben Zabara (probably a physician of Barcelona) proceeds in a similar manner in his tale Shaashuim (Pastime). The productions of Judah ben Shabbethai, likewise of Barcelona, hardly justify the tribute paid to him by Harizi. His dialog between "Wisdom and Wealth" has but little poetic value, and his satiric tale "The Woman-hater" is not much better.

The decline of Hebrew poetry set in rapidly. After the death of these poets, a century passed before a worthy successor arose. As the poetic virility was exhausted, those who wrote at all were mere rimesters, imitators. Abraham ben Hasdai of Barcelona, the zealous defender of Maimonides, adapted from the Arabic into Hebrew an ethical discussion under the title "The Prince and the

Nazarite." A poor copyist of Southern France, Berechiah ben Natronai ha-Nakdan (flourished about 1230-45) sought to revive the fable which was so popular among the ancient Hebrews. But of the hundred and seven fables contained in his collection only a few are original, the rest being adaptations from older fabulists. Another fabulist, Isaac ibn Abu Sahula of Northern Spain wrote (1244) "Fables of Antiquity" (Mashal ha-Kadmoni) in order to prove that the Hebrew muse was not inferior to the Arabic. But his bombastic lines could hardly convince anyone that Hebrew poetry was still in a position to vie with the Arabic. It would seem, though, that the Arabic productions of Jewish poets were of a higher character. The Arabs valued highly the love-poems of Abu Ishak Ibrahim ibn Sahl of Seville (about 1211-1250) and said of them that they were touching and melodious. This poet probably wore the mask of Islam under the Almohades of Southern Spain.

The decline of knowledge in the post-Maimonidean time was even greater than that of poetry. A sound biblical exegesis could not possibly thrive when philosophers and Cabalists vied with one another in distorting the Scriptures in order to find a seeming biblical support for their theories. The splendid contributions of former times fell into oblivion. After the death of David Kimhi a considerable time passed before a new exegete and grammarian appeared. Nahmanides did, indeed, occupy himself with biblical exegesis, and evinced a correct, grammatical appreciation of language, but exegesis was to him not an object in itself but only a means by which to refute antagonistic views. Thus withered more and more the beautiful garland of Jewish science wreathed by the hands of the Jewish-Spanish thinkers of yore.

CHAPTER VIII

RELIGIOUS DISPUTATIONS AND THE BURNING OF THE TALMUD

(1240-1270)

In the course of the internal dissensions between the rationalists and the Cabalists, the venomous seed scattered by the papacy ripened into fruit. Persecutions of Jews that were hitherto sporadic became henceforth of frequent occurrence, spread from place to place like an epidemic, and grew bloodier year by year. It is true that Innocent III aimed by no means at the death of the Jews but only at their humiliation. But the populace, glad to see a caste that was even lower than itself, did not rest content with the mere degradation of the Jews. These, stigmatized by the Church and society, were looked upon by the brutalized populace as outcasts whom one may slay without conscientious scruples like so many mangy dogs. All sorts of crimes were fabricated against the Jews and found credence. The charge of child-murder was hurled at the Jews so often from time to time, in one place or another, and asserted with such self-confidence that even well-meaning Christians be-

gan to believe the accusations true. Between Lauda and Bischofsheim (Baden) the corpse of a Christian was found. Who was the murderer? Jews, naturally. Upon this mere accusation the mob and the priests fell upon the Jewish men, women and children of the two cities, and put them to death. When the massacre was over, eight learned men were put to trial for the assassination of a Christian (Jan. 2 and 3, 1235), and were condemned to death, after confessing their guilt under torture. The robbing of Jewish houses was ever the inevitable concomitant of such massacres. The Jews of the neighborhood appealed to Pope Gregory IX for protection, and the latter issued a bull to Christendom (May 3, 1235) that repeated and confirmed the partly favorable constitution of Innocent III. Some were of the opinion that the pope was induced to issue that bull by the payment of a considerable sum of money on the part of the Jews; so low was the sense of justice in those days. At any rate, this papal bull had little effect. The spirit of intolerance that was taught in the schools, and preached by the Dominicans from the pulpits had entered into the very blood and even the noblest natures were infected by it. What profited it the Jews that proportionately they were the most numerous promoters of the sciences, that they made those sciences accessible to the Christians either by the translation of instructive works from foreign languages or by original contributions particularly in the domain of medicine, that they supplied the book market with intellectual products as they did the marts with goods? The Christians didn't thank them for their services; they rewarded them with a blow on the head.

The treatment the Jews received at the hands of the greatest and most enlightened emperor may serve as a striking illustration of the attitude of

mediaevalism to the Jews. Frederick II, the last of the Hohenstaufen emperors, was the most gifted and unprejudiced monarch of this century. More Sicilian than German, he was a lover of knowledge and a generous patron of scholars. When the University of Naples was founded, Frederick provided for the translation of philosophic and astronomic works from the Arabic—a work in which Jews also participated. The emperor stood in correspondence with a young Jewish scholar, Judah ben Solomon Cohen ibn Malka of Toledo, and was so impressed with his knowledge that he probably induced him to come to Italy. The emperor invited another Jewish scholar, Jacob Anatoli, the son-in-law of Samuel ibn Tibbon, to come from Provence to Naples for the purpose of translating scientific works from the Arabic, and paid him a fixed annual salary. Probably at the emperor's instance, Anatoli or another Jewish scholar at court translated Maimonides' "Guide" into Latin with the assistance of a Christian scholar, and the emperor used to read it and study it.

One would expect that such a man would be well disposed towards the Jews. His own Christian orthodoxy was rather questionable. Pope Gregory IX, his mortal enemy, accused him of having uttered the blasphemous statement that mankind had been deceived by three frauds: Moses, Jesus and Mohammed, two of whom died gloriously, while the third met with an ignominious end on the cross. Frederick, therefore, could not have objected too seriously to the non-belief of the Jews in Christianity. And yet the emperor Frederick was no less hostile to the Jews than the fanatic St. Louis of France. A mortal enemy of the papacy that interfered with his enterprises on every step, he nevertheless enforced in his states the anti-Jewish canonical laws, and excluded the Jews from

all public offices. In his capital, Palermo, he forced the Jews to live in a ghetto, an act of intolerance that surpassed even that of the popes of that time. In Austria, under the reign of the dukes of Babenberg, Jews were then permitted to hold office. Archduke Frederick I. (called the Warlike) recognized the value of the Jews as promoters of commerce, entrusted to Jews the administration of his finances, and conferred honorary titles upon them. Two brothers, Leblin and Nekelo, bore the official title of "Margraves of the Duke of Austria." This same archduke issued a series of laws (1244) with reference to the Jews of his domains that breathed the spirit of justice and humanity, and served as a model for other princes who wished to protect the Jews against violence and mistreatment. Those laws not only protected the life and property of the Jews, but guaranteed them absolute liberty and freedom of movement, and conferred upon them an independent jurisdiction, removing them entirely from the power of Christian judges. Christians were enjoined to respect Jewish synagogs and cemeteries on pain of severe punishment. The rate of interest was reduced, but was left sufficiently high to meet commercial requirements. The liens of Jewish creditors were given special protection. This statute of Frederick I reacted favorably upon the Jews of other countries, too, for in less than twenty years it was adopted by Hungary, Bohemia, Great Poland, Meissen, Thuringia and afterwards by Silesia also. But the example set by the petty duke for the protection of Jews against violence displeased the mighty emperor Frederick II. He issued an edict interdicting Jews from occupying any public office in Austria, and emphasized with special satisfaction the principles that Jews wherever they may be, were the bondmen of the emperor. He held so firmly to the

anti-Jewish canonical laws of the Lateran Council that he enforced the wearing of the Jewish badge in his hereditary possessions even more zealously than the Spanish kings, and oppressed his Jewish subjects by extortionate taxes. He did, indeed, permit the Jews who had fled from the fanaticism of the African Almohades to settle in Sicily; but while other settlers were exempted from all taxes for a period of ten years, the Jewish fugitives were burdened with taxes at once, and were confined to agriculture. In a word, he treated the Jews as a despised caste.

On the occasion of the new crusade preached by Gregory IX, the holy warriors fell upon the communities of Anjou and Poitou, in the cities of Bordeaux, Angouleme, and others in order to force them into baptism; but as the Jews remained steadfast, the mob attacked them with unparalleled cruelty, trampled many of them under their horses' hoofs, spared neither children nor pregnant women, left their dead bodies unburied, destroyed holy books, burned their houses, and plundered their property. Over three thousand perished on that occasion (summer, 1236), and more than five hundred embraced Christianity. The surviving Jews again complained to the pope, and the latter, in a letter addressed to the prelates as well as to Louis IX of France (Sept., 1236), deplored the massacre and pointed out that the Church desired neither the annihilation of the Jews nor their forced conversion. But such occasional admonitions were of little avail in the face of the detestation of Jews which the Church itself had deeply rooted in the hearts of the Christians. Louis IX, so noble and generous in other respects, was so dominated by his abhorrence of the Jews that he could not bear the sight of a Jew. He favored the conversion of the Jews by any means; children whose fathers

were converted but whose mothers remained loyal to Judaism were wrested from their mothers' arms upon the order of Louis the Saint. Only one expedient was left the Jews by which they could allay the fury invited against them—money. By this expedient they induced Henry III of England to send heralds throughout his kingdom to proclaim that no one should dare do the Jews any injury. But this expedient was a double-edged sword that might turn against those who used it. To bribe the powers that be required a great deal of money; in order to obtain money the Jews were compelled to charge extortionate rates of interest. This again aroused the hatred of the population and exposed them to mistreatment. The frequent complaints of the usury of the Jews led Louis IX to reduce the rate of interest, and often to annul a part of the debt. But when Louis attempted to abolish usury entirely, the barons whom he consulted maintained that Jewish usurers were preferable to Christian ones who crushed their debtors with even more extortionate rates of interest.

In the midst of these oppressions, hatreds and persecutions, one corner was still left wherein the Jews could find repose and forget their trials: the Talmudic school. Here, where old and young gathered to study the Talmud, they were at peace. In the absorption into the depths of the Talmud, the students forgot the outside world with its venomous hatreds, its malicious laws, and its torments. Here they were sons of kings; the majesty of thought enhaloed their brow, the joyousness of intellectual activity illumined their countenances. To solve a difficult Talmudic problem, to throw light upon an obscure point, to discover something new that escaped the notice of former generations constituted their happiness. They expected no offices or dignity for their mental exertions, they received

no tangible reward for burning the midnight oil. They wished only to satisfy their desire for knowledge, to fulfill their religious duty, and, by all means, to make sure of the future reward. Study was the most important of all occupations for every one, and the Talmud was the most important of all studies. A child was no sooner able to lisp than it was taken from its home to the synagog or "Shul" (school) on the morning of the Feast of Pentecost, at first with covered face that it might not look upon anything unholy; and there the Hebrew alphabet was read to him forward and backward, and appropriate verses were recited. The day when the child began his studies was a day of rejoicing for the parents and the entire community. If the child was not too dull, he was led from the Bible to the Talmud. The Talmudic students formed the most highly respected class of Jewish society. This absorbing occupation with the Talmud was certainly one-sided, but it had something ideal about it. This inner sanctuary of the Jews no enemy invaded hitherto. The secular powers paid no attention to it; the Church had no power over the internal affairs of the Jews; here its fulminations reverberated harmlessly.

However, upon the instigation of a converted Jew, this inner peace, this last retreat, was soon to be denied the Jews. A Talmudic student by name of Donin (or Dunin) of la Rochelle in Northern France was excommunicated by the French rabbis because he expressed doubts about the Talmud and about the oral law in general. Denied the companionship of the Jews and of Christians, Donin decided to embrace Christianity and assumed the name of Nicholas. Filled with hatred against the rabbis and the Talmud, the apostate, probably urged on by the priests, incited the mob of crusaders against the Jews and their books, and

brought about the bloody persecutions in Anjou and Poitou. But this shedding of blood did not yet appease his vengeance. He appeared before Pope Gregory IX as accuser of the Talmud. The Talmud, he charged, though placed by the rabbis even above the Scriptures, perverts the meaning of the Scriptures, contains unworthy conceptions of God, and teems with aspersions upon the founder of Christianity and upon his mother. Nicholas convinced the pope that the Talmud was solely responsible for the refusal of the Jews to accept Christianity. Remove the Talmud and they would abandon their impiety.

The excessive veneration of older authorities entertained by the editors of the Talmud was partly to blame for the tribulations that followed the denunciations of Nicholas Donin. Ignoring the maxim of Abtalion, "Ye wise men, be careful in your utterances," these editors perpetuated and incorporated into the Talmud every utterance, every intimate conversation, every jest that escaped the Tanaim or Amoraim, because they believed they were among their own, and the outside world would not learn of it. And now, the sins of the fathers were visited upon their grandchildren. Because of such inadvertent utterances the Talmud was dragged into the prisoner's dock, and all Jewry who accepted the Talmud as their guide in life were implicated as accomplices, first by the charges of Nicholas Donin, and, in the course of the centuries, more frequently and with greater bitterness. The apostate made citations from the Talmud and drew up thirty-five articles, some of which were to prove that the Talmud contains errors and foolishness, others that it contains blasphemies against God, still others that it teaches dishonesty and deception against the Christians, and others finally that it blasphemes Jesus, his mother and the Church.

Compared with the hateful invectives the compilers of the gospels and the church-fathers down to Jerome and Augustine employed against the Jews and rendered them hated and despised on that account, the few references to Jesus in the Talmud are mere harmless railleries; but the Church, victorious in its conflict with the synagog, was sensitive of every disrespectful utterance. Pope Gregory became convinced at once of the guilt of the Jews and of the Talmud, and he immediately addressed a circular letter to all the prelates of France, England, Castile, Aragon and Portugal in which he explained the charges advanced by Nicholas, and commanded them to confiscate all copies of the Talmud on the first Saturday after Shrovetide while the Jews were assembled in their synagogs, and to deliver them into the hands of the Dominicans and the Franciscans. The pope called upon the kings of these countries to assist the priests in this matter with their police power, and admonished the provincials of the two orders who had charge of the inquisition of books to investigate the contents of the Talmudic writings, and if they sustained Nicholas Donin's charges, to burn the copies of the Talmud publicly (June, 1239). He gave Nicholas a special letter to the Bishop of Paris requesting the latter to take active measures against the Talmud in France, since that country was then the chief seat of Talmudic learning, the native home of the Tosafists.

In Spain and in England Gregory's orders were completely ignored, but in France, under the reign of the fanatical Louis IX the Jews were compelled to deliver their copies of the Talmud, and the Talmud itself was placed on trial. The king arranged for a disputation between Donin and four rabbis. The four rabbis called upon to defend the Talmud were Jehiel (Vivo) of Paris, Moses of Coucy,

Judah ben David of Melun and Samuel ben Solomon of Chateau-Thierry. Jehiel was selected as spokesman because he was a more fluent speaker than his associates. The disputation took place in the royal court (June 25, 1240) in Latin, in the presence of several bishops, many Dominicans, and the shrewd Queen-Mother Blanche.

At first R. Jehiel declined to argue the question at all, appealed to the constitution of the popes that assured the Jews absolute independence in their internal affairs. He remarked that the Talmud was of vital necessity to the Jews, and that all of them were ready to die for it. The queen, however, calmed him, assured him that their lives were not in danger, that she would protect them, and requested him to answer the questions directed to him. When Donin demanded that he take a solemn oath that he would reply to the best of his knowledge and conscience without any mental reservation, R. Jehiel remarked that he had never taken an oath in his life and that he did not wish to mention the name of God unnecessarily. The Queen excused him from taking the oath. The disputation then proceeded, and revolved about the two points whether the Talmud contained objectionable passages with reference to God and to morality, and whether it cast aspersions upon Jesus. In regard to the second point, Jehiel admitted that the Talmud does reflect upon a certain Jesus, son of Panthera, but contended that that Jesus was not identical with Jesus of Nazareth but lived long before him. This was no subterfuge on Jehiel's part; he was misled into this belief by an anachronism in the Talmudic legend of Jesus. Among other things, Jehiel asserted that the church-father Jerome and other teachers of the Church who were acquainted with the Talmud never charged the Talmud with hostility to Christianity. This false assertion was

made by the apostate only to avenge himself on his former coreligionists.

The examination of Jehiel of Paris continued for two days during which time the community fasted and prayed to God to avert the danger. Judah of Melun, who was kept in custody, and was thus unable to communicate with R. Jehiel, was examined on the third day. On the main point his testimony coincided with that of R. Jehiel that the Talmudic passages reflecting upon Jesus do not refer to Jesus of Nazareth. The two other rabbis were not interrogated any further. It seems that an influential prelate exerted himself in behalf of the Jews and induced the authorities to return the confiscated copies of the Talmud to their owners. Unfortunately this prelate died suddenly. The fanatical monks regarded this incident as a divine retribution for his friendship to the Jews, and the narrow-minded king shared their views. Thereupon, at the command of the king, the copies of the Talmud and kindred books were seized again, and twenty-four wagon-loads were burned publicly in Paris (1242). Two young men, the Provençal Abraham Bedaresi and the German Meir of Rothenburg, wrote elegies commemorative of this, the first burning of the Talmud. The grief of the Jews was very keen; pious Jews fasted every year on the anniversary of the burning of the Talmud.

The burning of the Talmud had one good effect; it partly disarmed the opponents of the Maimonists, and, for the time being, allayed the violent passions of the hostile parties within Judaism. The persecution to which the Talmud was subjected acted as a unifying force upon the various factions, and the Talmud became even more endeared to the Jewish heart. When Pope Innocent IV was informed that, despite the interdict of the Church, the Jews were studying the Talmud in secret, he admon-

ished the King of France to proceed energetically in the seizure of the copies of the Talmud. Copies of the Talmud were burned in France repeatedly.

In this way restrictive measures alternated with persecutions, at frequent intervals here and there, but mostly in Germany. When the Mongols and the Tatars, the savage warriors of Genghis Khan, overran Europe, devastated Russia and Poland, and rolled on to the German border, the Jews were accused of giving secret support to those enemies of Christendom. Instead of laying the blame upon the emperor Frederick II, and the pope, who, in the midst of their stubborn personal quarrel, had no eyes for the approach of the savage conquerors, the fury of the populace spent itself upon the innocent Jews of Germany. It is true that the Mongolians counted some Jewish warriors among their number, the independent Jewish tribes of Khorasan, or, as legend has it, the remnant of the Ten Tribes who lived in the seclusion of the Caspian mountains. But how were the German Jews to know that there were coreligionists among those Mongolian hordes? A rumor was spread that the Jews, under the pretext of delivering poisoned food to the Mongolians, sent them all sorts of weapons in sealed barrels—and many Jews of Germany had to pay dearly for this unfounded charge.

Not content with all the humiliations it inflicted upon the Jews, the Church determined to deprive them of the last vestige of influence that they still exacted in Christian society. The practice of medicine was mostly in Jewish hands; almost every prince and noble had his Jewish private physician who exerted more or less influence upon the mind of him whose body was entrusted to his care. For this very reason, the Church refused to tolerate this influence of the Jews upon the men of power. The council of Beziers (1246) was the first to take steps

to exclude Jews from practising medicine among Christians; and this restriction was reiterated by another council of Southern France. The Jews had rendered valuable services to the science of medicine in Southern France. The Tibbonides, father, son and grandson, were the teachers of Christian physicians; and now, the third Tibbonide, Moses (flourished in Montpellier about 1250-65),. the translator of philosophic and medical works, must cease to treat his Christian patients! But though the Church could control absolutely the souls of the faithful, it could not control their bodies, and this canonical law was, therefore, of non-effect. In the course of sickness even the most fanatic Christian sought the services of the skilled Jewish physician. The Count of Poitou and Toulouse, brother of King Louis IX, when he contracted a disease of the eye had almost to beg for the services of a famous Jewish oculist, Abraham of Aragon. In the famous medical academy of Montpellier Jews were for a long time permitted to stand examinations and to practice, and were even admitted into the faculty.

The condition of the Jews of England in the same period, during the long reign of Henry III (1216-72), was a deplorable one. Henry III was not so heartless as his father; he permitted new Jewish immigrants to settle in his hereditary domain, and restrained the intolerance of the clergy against the Jews. He appointed a chief rabbi for English Jewry who was given considerable authority over them, but this official was in reality only a fiscal agent for the collection of the royal revenues from the Jews. To replenish his treasury that was ever empty owing to his indiscretions, his extravagance and his exploitation on the part of the papal legate, Henry III imposed upon the Jews under various pretexts, an unbearable burden of taxes. He even

summoned a Jewish parliament, and charged it with the collection of a considerable sum of money for him, which, of course, had to be done. When Henry had sufficiently exploited the Jews and was simply ashamed to extort any more money from them he mortgaged them to his brother Richard who was even less scrupulous. The clergy, with their canonical oppressions, contributed their share to the wretchedness of the Jews. This double tyranny rendered the lot of the Jews so unbearable that the chief rabbi, Elias, and his colleagues declared twice that the communities could not possibly comply any further with the extortionate demands made upon them and that they were prepared to leave the country. The king, however, would not grant them permission to leave. The Jews were compelled to remain in England against their will, to hand over their last penny to the king, and to continue to practice usury in order to replenish the ever empty royal treasury. From a charter that has been preserved it is seen that in the course of seven years, Henry III extorted from the Jews £422,000. A single Jew, Aaron of York, had to deliver in the course of seven years, thirty thousand marks of silver to the king, and two hundred marks of gold to the queen.

Looked at superficially, and in comparison with the condition of their brethren in England, France and Germany, the Jews of Spain at this time lived very happily indeed. Alfonso X (1252-84), King of Castile, who was styled "the wise" by his contemporaries, was indeed a lover and patron of science, and was ambitious to emulate the fame of his Mohammedan predecessors Abd al-Rahman III and Al-Hakim. His father Ferdinand the Saint, a term always synonymous with intolerance, was not particularly fond of the Jews; but the son who generally disagreed with his father, seemed to

differ from him in this respect, too. In the expedition against Seville which he led while yet the crown-prince Jewish soldiers also participated, and when that city was taken, and its lands were distributed among the soldiery, Alfonso assigned a separate village to his Jewish soldiers (Aldea de los Judios). The Jews of Seville who probably assisted Alfonso in the conquest of the city, because they were compelled to lead a wretched existence under the Almohades as nominal Mohammedans, received three mosques which they converted into synagogs, and were given an exclusive quarter separated from the rest of the city by a wall. Out of gratitude, the community of Seville presented the victor with a costly artistically wrought key, containing a Hebrew and Spanish legend: "The king of kings opens, the king of the land shall enter." When Alfonso ascended the throne, he entrusted Jews with important offices. Don Meir de Malea, a man of education and of Talmudic scholarship, was appointed minister of finance. with the title "Almoxarif." That his administration proved satisfactory to the king is evidenced by the fact that his office, upon his death, passed over to his son Don Zag (Isaac). For a considerable time it was the prevailing custom in Spain to entrust Jews with the ministry of finance because they were more conversant with matters financial than the Spanish knights. Other Jews, too, had access to Alfonso's court. Alfonso had a Jewish physician in ordinary, Don Judah ben Moses Kohen, who was at the same time his astronomer and astrologer. As there were then but few Christians in Spain who were familiar with the Arabic, though they lived in an Arabic environment, the Jews, here, too, as everywhere else, had to act as intermediaries in order to make scientific works accessible to the Castilians. Jewish scholars translated such works from the Arabic into

Castilian, and clerics rendered the Castilian into Latin. Don Zag (Isaac) ibn Sid, a cantor of a Toledo synagog, and one of the greatest astronomers of his time, was called by the king "his wise man." Don Zag, upon the order of the king, prepared astronomic tables that rendered Alfonso's name more famous than his victories or statesmanship could have done. The "Alfonso Tables," that should properly be called the Zag or Sid Tables, were used by astronomers until the modern astronomic discoveries were made. Another Jewish scientist of Alfonso's court was Samuel Halevi (Abulasia Alawi?) whose name is linked with an ingenious water-clock which he made upon the king's order. This access of Jews to Alfonso's court was naturally obnoxious to the representatives of the Church, and Pope Nicholas III reprimanded Alfonso for it.

But despite the fact that Alfonso attracted learned Jews to his court and exploited their talents, as it were, the conditions of the Jews of Castile during his reign were not so favorable as might be expected at first glance. Alfonso, too, was not above the prejudices of his time; the spirit of Jew-hatred, kindled by Innocent III, had taken possession of him, too. Either to curry favor with the prelates, or to please himself, Alfonso assigned to the Jews a humiliating position. Alfonso published in Castilian an extensive code of laws (1266-7) for all the nations of his kingdom a large part of which is devoted to the Jews. It reads: "Although the Jews deny Christ, they are tolerated in all Christian countries only that they might serve as a reminder to everyone that they are members of the race that crucified Jesus." "In former times," it reads further, "the Jewish race was honored and called the People of God, but since they committed the crime against Jesus they lost that advantage, and no Jew

must be treated with honor, or occupy any public office in Spain." Alfonso admitted into his code all the restrictions which the Byzantines and the Spanish Visigoths had imposed upon the Jews with malicious refinement, and added a paragraph that the Jews and Jewesses must wear a badge on their headgear; violators of this law were to be fined ten ducats, or, if the offender be poor, be scourged ten lashes publicly. Jews and Christians must neither eat nor bathe together. The old restriction that Jews must not appear on the streets on Good Friday also found a place in his code. Alfonso, the wise, paid credence to the malicious fabrication that Jews crucify a Christian child every year on Good Friday, and decreed that whoever should crucify even only a wax figure on that day would receive the penalty of death. Pope Innocent IV protested in vain against the popular belief in that malicious lie; the papal voice, raised in behalf of the Jews, was no longer infallible. It is hardly credible that a king who entrusted his own life to a Jewish physician could have issued a law that made it an offence for a Christian to accept a remedy from the hand of a Jew. The only redeeming feature about Alfonso's legislation is that it ordains that synagogs be not profaned, that Jews be not dragged to baptism by force, be not summoned to the courts on their holidays, and that, in case an oath is required of them, they take a simple oath on the Torah without any humiliating ceremony such as was required of them in Germany.

For the time being, however, Alfonso's Jewish legislation had no practical significance, for his code assumed legal validity only in later times. Alfonso himself disregarded his own code by appointing Jews to various offices. Nevertheless, this code, measuring as it did the Jews by the canonical standard, proved disastrous to the Spanish Jews in the

end, and gradually transformed their paradise into a hell. It was from this code that the Spaniards imbibed their ineradicable hatred of the Jews. Alfonso's legislation remained in force in Spanish America until recent times, while his astronomic tables were forgotten.

In the kingdom of Aragon the Jews fared still worse. King James (Jacob I), whose reign extended over a long period, possessed estates in Southern France, came in frequent contact with the fanatical King Louis IX of France and his advisers, and learned from them how to mistreat the Jews. Moreover, this king had loved much and sinned much, was therefore ever in need of a confessor, and was dependent upon him; and while he did not always obey his spiritual adviser, he gladly made concessions to him when Jews and Mohammedans were concerned. In addition, the head of the Dominican order, Raymond de Peñaforte, James' father-confessor, had set his heart upon the conversion of Jews and Mohammedans. In the Dominican colleges, the Hebrew and the Arabic languages were taught upon his order to enable the friars to employ these languages in their missionary enterprises.

A member of this order, Pablo Christiani, a Jewish apostate, was the first missionary to the Jews. He traveled through Southern France and elsewhere, summoned the Jews, and while in Gerona, the rabbi Nahmanides, to disputations, and sought to convince them that the Messiahship and the divinity of Jesus were confirmed in the Bible and in the Talmud. But as his mission proved futile, de Peñaforte hit upon the idea of instituting a public disputation in the royal palace between Pablo Christiani and Nahmanides under the delusion that if the latter were converted all communities would inevitably accept Christianity. There-

upon, Nahmanides, as the most prominent and most learned rabbi, and several other Jews were invited by King James to present themselves in Barcelona for a solemn disputation (1263). Drawn into this disputation against his will, the rabbi of Gerona presented a dignified appearance, and represented Judaism before a Christian king as worthily as, twelve centuries ago, Philo of Alexandria did before a pagan emperor. Nahmanides demanded at the start absolute freedom of speech which the king granted. To de Peñaforte's remark in this connection that he refrain from abusing this freedom by blasphemies against Christianity Nahmanides replied with dignity that he, too, was conversant with the rules of decency.

The disputation of Barcelona continued for four days (July 20-23) in the palace of the king, and in the presence of the entire court, many high Church dignitaries, knights, and men of the people. Many Jews also had to be present in the audience; Nahmanides suggested at the start that, inasmuch as Judaism and Christianity differed in so many points, the disputation be limited to the following essentials: whether or not the Messiah had already come; whether the Old Testament regards the Messiah as a god or only as a man born of human parents; and, finally, whether the Jews or the Christians have the true faith. The king and all the participants agreed to this proposition. It is singular, though, that while Nicholas Donin charged the Talmud with hostility to Jesus and Christians, Pablo Christiani maintained, on the contrary, that the Talmud acknowledged the Messiahship of Jesus —a point which Nahmanides could easily refute. Pablo based his main argument upon haggadic passages the argumentative force of which Nahmanides shattered by asserting that those passages were not genuine tradition but casual homiletic

utterances. Pablo argued that such a confession was heresy, as though the Dominican was a better judge than the rabbi as to what constitutes orthodoxy or heterodoxy in Judaism, but Nahmanides held his ground. Another daring, casual statement of Nahmanides that the king was of greater value to him than the Messiah he justified by the statement: "The Jews derive greater credit, on the whole, when they fulfill the laws of Judaism under a Christian ruler, in exile, amidst humiliations and discriminations, than they would under the mighty Jewish king, in prosperity and freedom; for the Messiah is to be regarded only as a king of flesh and blood." Nahmanides did not fail to advance the striking objection to the Messiahship of Jesus, already employed by older polemics. All the prophets foretold that, in the Messianic era, moral nobility would reign supreme among the human race, and that war and the shedding of blood would cease, whereas since the coming of Jesus the world was full of violence and injustice. The Christians were the most warlike among the nations. And, turning to the king, Nahmanides remarked: "Would it not be difficult for thee, O king, and thy knights, to abandon the pursuit of war as the coming of the Messianic age demands?"

As Nahmanides, in the course of the first three days, had spoken frankly, though in a dignified manner, of Christianity, the Jews of Barcelona implored him to discontinue the disputation for fear of Dominican persecutions. Knights and Christian citizens of Barcelona, solicitous for the Jews, also sought to put a stop to the disputation. Nahmanides laid this fact before the king, but as the latter insisted upon the continuance of the disputation the intellectual tournament proceeded. Nahmanides came off victorious in the end, for Pablo was unequal to the striking refutations he

advanced. At its conclusion the king, in a private audience given to Nahmanides, remarked that he had never heard an unjust cause so intelligently defended. The Dominicans, however, sought to create the impression that Pablo had achieved a signal victory, and that Nahmanides fled in humiliation. But Nahmanides tarried a few days in Barcelona because he had learned that the king and the Dominicans intended to visit the synagog on the following Saturday. They did come, in fact, and de Peñaforte resumed the disputation in the synagog to which Nahmanides replied. Before his departure he was again received in private audience by the king, and presented with a royal gift.

The consequences of the Barcelona disputation were not so harmless by any means. As de Peñaforte was determined upon the conversion of the Jews, he obtained from the king a safe-conduct for his protégé Pablo Christiani (Aug., 1263) for further missionary journeys. What he failed to accomplish in Barcelona with an opponent like Nahmanides, he might possibly accomplish in other places with less able opponents. The communities of Aragon and of the district of Southern France that belonged to it were ordered to listen quietly to Pablo Christiani wherever he chose to preach, whether it were a synagog or elsewhere, to answer his questions respectfully, and to furnish him with all the books he needed in proof of his arguments. His expenses were to be defrayed by the Jews, but could be deducted by them from their taxes. But inasmuch as Pablo Christiani, despite the protection of the king, met with no friendly reception on the part of his former coreligionists, he adopted the policy of Nicholas Donin, and charged the Talmud with containing blasphemies against Jesus and Mary. Thereupon, Pope Clement IV issued a bull (1264) to the effect that in Spain also, and everywhere else,

all copies of the Talmud be confiscated, and if found guilty of blasphemy, be consigned to the flames. The apostate Pablo Christiani himself brought this bull to Aragon. King James, thereupon, issued a decree that the Talmud be investigated and all objectionable passages therein be expunged. He appointed a board of censorship composed of the Bishop of Barcelona, de Peñaforte, and three other Dominicans, whose duty it was to designate the passages that were to be stricken from the Talmud. This was the first censorship of the Talmud on the part of the Dominicans in Spain. At any rate, this trial of the Talmud in Aragon turned out more favorably than in France, where the entire Talmud was condemned and consigned to the flames. The reason of this comparative moderation is to be found in the circumstance that one of the censors, the learned Dominican Raymond Martin who afterwards published two anti-Jewish works, was convinced that several passages of the Talmud bore testimony to the truth of Christianity. For this reason the Talmud was not to be destroyed in its entirety.

But the end of the prejudicial effects of the Barcelona disputation was not yet; and Nahmanides himself became involved. To meet the missionary agitations of Pablo Christiani and the vainglorious boast of the Dominicans that they had achieved a signal triumph in the Barcelona disputation, Nahmanides felt it his duty to publish in Hebrew, for the benefit of his coreligionists, a faithful account of the events of Barcelona. He made no secret of his undertaking; he submitted a copy of his work (Milhemeth Hobah) to the bishop of Gerona, and as the latter raised no objection to it, a number of copies were made and distributed among the Jewish communities. This naturally aroused the anger of the Dominicans against him.

Pablo Christiani read into it the grossest blasphemies against Christianity, turned it into a capital offence, and preferred formal charges against the author and his work with the king. Don James had to entertain the charge, but having little faith in the fairness of the Dominicans, he summoned an extraordinary commission, invited Nahmanides to defend himself, and had the trial conducted in his presence Nahmanides admitted that his book contained a number of arguments against Christianity, but neither more nor less than those he had advanced at the disputation in the presence of the king and for the utterances of which he had received explicit permission both from the king and from de Peñaforte; he should therefore not be punished for writing what he was permitted to speak. The king and the commission admitted the justice of Nahmanides' position, but in order not to arouse the anger of the Dominicans, Nahmanides was condemned to two years' exile from his native land, and his writings were ordered burned. The Dominicans were by no means satisfied with this comparatively mild sentence. It seems that they intended summoning Nahmanides before a tribunal of their own and visiting an exemplary punishment upon him. The king, however, objected strenuously to such a procedure, and gave Nahmanides a sort of charter to the effect that in this affair the king reserves sole jurisdiction for himself (April, 1265). The Dominicans were furious at the king for this infringement upon their rights and appealed to Pope Clement IV. The pope, who entertained additional grievances against the king of Aragon, charged him with a list of sins, and demanded that he dismiss all his Jewish officials, and that he punish severely the arrant miscreant who dared publish a book wherein it is stated that Judaism had gained a victory over Christianity (1266).

At the age of seventy, Nahmanides was compelled to leave his native land, his two sons, his academy, his friends and admirers, and to go into banishment. He turned to the Holy Land for which he cherished the same fervent yearnings as did Judah Halevi. The condition of the Holy Land and of the Holy City upon his arrival filled him with keen grief; he felt more bitterly disappointed even than Judah Halevi. The Mongolians or the Tatars under the Sultan Hulagu had wrought complete ruin upon the country several years before (1260). After the Mongols were driven out, the population of Jerusalem consisted of only two thousand Mohammedans, three hundred Christians and only one or two Jewish families. Upon the Mount of Olives, across the ruins of the former Temple, Nahmanides sobbed out his profound grief at the desolation of the Holy City, but it was no Zionide that his surcharged heart poured forth. Poetry with its power to populate desert places, to rebuild ruined empires, to allay sorrow and to assuage grief, the poetry of a Judah Halevi—this gift was denied Nahmanides. He lamented in verses written by other poets.

But the Spanish exile did not wholly surrender to his grief; the Holy Land, his ideal home of yore, soon felt his presence. He erected synagogs, organized communities, and established a seat of Jewish learning that had disappeared from the Holy Land ever since the capture of Jerusalem by the crusaders. A circle of disciples gathered about him, and students flocked to him even from the regions of the Euphrates. Even Karaites sat at his feet, among them Aaron ben Joseph the Older, who achieved fame later on. Although Nahmanides was absorbed wholly in Talmudic Judaism, he, none the less, as a son of Spain, was sufficiently possessed of general knowledge with which to fruc-

tify the desert of Oriental Jewry. Even his cabalistic theories which he first transplanted into Palestine and where it found a fertile soil, he gave at least a rational point of view of which his Oriental coreligionists, sunk in ignorance or in Talmudic one-sidedness, had no conception. He endeavored to rationalize even the irrational, and thus counteract thoughtlessness and stupidity. He awakened a sense of biblical exegesis in which the Oriental Jews were especially deficient. With that object in view, Nahmanides completed his commentaries on the Scriptures, and especially on the Pentateuch. This work reflects his peculiar genius, his warm and tender heart, his lucid thoughts, and his mystic dreams. Like countless men before him and since, he found his own views of the world reflected in this book of books, and he interpreted it from this point of view.

The influence that Nahmanides exerted upon his contemporaries and upon posterity was due more to his personality than to his writings. His numerous disciples, the most important of whom was Solomon ben Adret, impressed upon Spanish Jewry the stamp of his characteristics. Fervent and unshakable loyalty to Judaism, veneration of the Talmud and absolute devotion to it, a superficial acquaintance with contemporaneous knowledge and philosophy, acknowledgment of the cabala as very ancient tradition to be treated with awe but not to be studied overmuch—all these characteristics are generally met with in the Spanish rabbis and leaders of Judaism. Through his correspondence with friends in Spain and Provence he reawakened a yearning for the Holy Land that attracted to it persons of visionary temperaments. In the wretchedness of the present, the glory of the past floated before their minds as an ideal. Nahmanides died after a sojourn of three years in the Holy Land, and was

buried in Haifa alongside of Jehiel of Paris who had preceded him to Palestine by a few years.

Were Jewish history to follow the chronicles, the books of memorial and the martyrologies, it would have to fill its pages with accounts of bloodshed and murders, paint them with blood and tears, and point the finger of accusation at a religion that formally trained its princes and peoples to become executioners and hangmen. For, from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, persecutions and massacres of Jews increased in an ever more horrible degree, only alternating with inhuman ecclesiastical and civil laws, all of which were calculated to humiliate and degrade the Jews, and to drive them to suicide. The prophetic description of the martyrdom of the Servant of God, the Messiah people, was fulfilled in horrible literalness: "He is stricken and oppressed and openeth not his mouth: Like a lamb he is led to slaughter, and like a sheep, dumb before its shearers, he openeth not his mouth. . . . From dungeon and court of justice he is put to death, for the sins of the nation he is afflicted" (Is. 53: 4-9). The nations of Europe formally vied with one another in the practice of cruelty upon the Jews. Under an orderly government or during a period of anarchy, the Jews suffered equally under the one as under the other.

In Germany, in the period of anarchy intervening between the death of Emperor Frederick II and the ascension of Rudolph of Hapsburg, in the course of the civil war between the Ghibellines and the Guelphs, the Jews were slaughtered by the thousands. Year by year martyrs fell in Weissenburg, Magdeburg, Arnstadt, Coblenz, Sinzig, Edfurt, and other places. There were Christian families in Germany who acquired fame by the burning of Jews, and who called themselves with pride Judenbrater (Jew-roasters). The leaders of the Church,

on their part, saw to it that no spark of human mercy for the Jews entered the hearts of their parishioners. The great council of Vienna (1264), presided over by a papal legate, not content with the badge which the German Jews had to wear, issued a decree compelling Jews to wear, in addition, a disfiguring headgear, a pointed horned hat or cap that could not but challenge the scorn of every street gamin. In France, Louis the Saint, urged on by his favorite, Pablo Christiani, admonished the authorities to execute the canonical decree with reference to the Jewish badge, and ordained that that badge consist of red felt or saffron-yellow cloth in the form of a wheel to be worn on the breast and back of the outer cloak "so that the stigmatized might be recognized from all sides."

The Church pursued the Jews with its hatred to the very border of Europe and Asia. The Hungarians and the Poles who had not yet laid aside their natural savagery and lust of war needed the Jews even more than the nations of Central and Western Europe did. With their industrial sense and practical skill the Jews rendered the natural wealth of the countries of the Lower Danube, on the Vistula and on both sides of the Carpathian Mountains useful and valuable. The efforts of the papacy to deprive the Jews of their leases on the salt, coinage and taxes of Hungary were futile because the latter were indispensable to the prosperity of the country. The Hungarian king Bela IV, after his country had become impoverished as a result of the devastations of the Mongolians, was driven by necessity to farm out the royal revenues to the Jews. Bela also adopted for the Jews of his country the constitution of Frederick the Warlike of Austria that was to protect them against the excesses of the rabble and of the priesthood, and granted them the right to administer their judicial

and internal affairs independently. The papacy, however, had its eye upon the Carpathian countries, partly with the view of inciting a new crusade against the Mongolians, and partly with the view of winning over to Rome by cunning or by force the schismatic adherents of the Greek church. Accordingly it sent thither its Franciscans and Dominicans who imparted their fanatical intolerance to the hitherto lukewarm Magyars. A great council was held in Ofen (Sept., 1279) composed of the prelates of Hungary and Southern Poland, under the presidency of the papal legate Philip, and this council decreed the proscription of the Jews of Hungary, Poland, Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Lodomeria, and Galicia. Jews and other inhabitants of the country who were not members of the Roman Catholic Church were to be excluded from tax farming and from any other public office, "because it was dangerous for Jews to live together with Christian families and to come in contact with them in the courtyards and in the houses." The synod of Ofen decreed also that the Jews of both sexes who lived in the domain of Hungary (Hungary and the provinces of Southern Poland) must wear a wheel of red cloth on their outer garments on the left side of the chest, and must not appear without that badge. For the time being, this exclusion of the Hungarian and Polish Jews from Christian society was of little moment, because they shared this exclusion with the Mohammedans and with the schismatic Greek Catholics. Moreover, the Magyars and the Poles were then not yet sufficiently under the influence of the Church to deny fire and water to Jews who did not wear a red or yellow badge. But half a century later, the evil seed bore its poisoned fruit. The last king of the Arpad dynasty, Ladislaus IV, confirmed the re-

strictive decrees issued by the synod of Ofen, and made them the law of the land in Hungary.

*The restrictions adopted by the synod of Ofen applied also to the Jews of Southern and Western Poland (Little Poland) where the Catholic church had not yet obtained a strong hold. At this period Poland had been converted into a veritable desert by the depredations of the Mongolians. Poland was then divided into numerous dukedoms and principalities. Most of these petty rulers were members of the house of Piast, who were torn by mutual animosities and lacked the intelligence to unite against the common enemy, the Mongolians. After the departure of the Mongolians, the Polish dukes, in their efforts to rehabilitate their devastated country, to induce the fugitives to return, and to introduce the arts of civilization decided to invite the Germans to settle in their midst. The suggestion of calling upon the assistance of a foreign nation, a circumstance that in the course of history proved the primary cause of the fall and the destruction of the kingdom, was carried out by the two grand dukes of the Piast family, who ruled almost simultaneously: Bolaslaw V, nicknamed "the Bashful," who reigned in Little Poland, and Boleslaw the Just who reigned in Great Poland (Kalisz, Posen, etc.). The Germans responded to the invitation, settled in Poland by the thousands, established their industries in the various ducal cities, and brought with them their charters, their guilds, and all the good and bad German customs and institutions. The Polish dukes, desirous of gaining the attachment of the German settlers, introduced in all the large cities the municipal constitutions in vogue in Germany, the so-called Mag-

* This paragraph and the following two are an abridgment of S. P. Rabinowitz's addenda to the Fifth Volume of his Hebrew translation of Graetz, pp. 137-142.—A. B. R.

deburg Law or German Law (jus Teutonicum). This act of the dukes calculated to promote the interests of Poland, proved disastrous to the country and its Jews in the course of five centuries.

The kings and nobles of Poland were, as a rule, friends and protectors of the Jews; even the petty nobility did not hate the Jews with the violence that characterized other Catholic countries at that time. The oppression of the Polish Jews emanated from two classes, from the priesthood that hated them on religious grounds, in harmony with the religious conception of the times, and from the municipalities, the guilds of workmen and householders that envied and feared their competition in trade and commerce. All the outrages perpetrated upon the Jews in the cities of Poland were instigated by the guilds in conjunction with the priests. The Polish rulers, in the hope of forestalling the persecutions on the part of the priesthood and the municipalities, determined to confer certain privileges upon the Jews, to give them the status of an independent guild, under the immediate protection of the king or the duke, so that the Church and the municipalities would have no jurisdiction over them. As long as Poland had a strong, centralized government, during the reign of the Piast dynasty, these privileges proved effective in protecting the Jews; but when the Jagellon dynasty came into power, and especially when Poland ceased to be a hereditary monarchy, when anarchy was the order of the day, and princes, great or little, seized the reins of government, the priesthood and the municipalities gained the upper hand, and rendered the lot of the Slavic Jews deplorable.

The first Polish ruler to confer special privileges upon the Jews, and to give them the status of an independent guild was Boleslaw the Just, Duke of Kalisz, grandfather of Casimir the Great, the most

powerful of the twenty-four dukes who then ruled Poland. The persecutions, massacres and crusades drove so large a number of Jews from Bohemia and Germany into Poland that they formed a fourteenth and in some places an eighth part of the entire population. Duke Boleslaw found it necessary, therefore, to define the status of the Jews and their relation to the government and to the rest of the population and granted them a charter (1263), modeled after the constitution of Frederick the Warlike of Austria, with some essential additions. The evident intention of this constitution was to protect the Jews against the injustice of the magisterial and ecclesiastical courts, and to give them a monopoly of the money market, that is, the right to loan money on interest. The Polish kings regarded it as a great advantage to the state to possess a class of people that were engaged in financial and commercial enterprises, and the Jews thus became a sort of bankers' guild with special rights and privileges. By virtue of these privileges, and particularly because of the independence in judicial matters that the charter conferred upon them, the Jews formed a separate entity in the midst of the country, under the special protection of the duke who guarded them against oppression in general and particularly against the calumny of child murder with its horrible consequences. This separation of the Jews from the other inhabitants rendered the former, in a sense, an alien race in the midst of their native land; but this condition was far preferable to the wretched existence of their coreligionists of Western Europe.

The situation in the Pyrenean Peninsula was similar to that of Hungary and Poland. Because the countries contained a Mohammedan population alongside of Jews and Christians, the intolerance of the Church could not prevail. Moreover, the

higher culture of the Spanish Jews, and their participation in all internal and external affairs of the land enabled them to counteract the hostile intentions of their enemies. Alfonso the Wise violated his own code that excluded Jews from state offices, and entrusted them with important public functions. He appointed Don Zag (Isaac) de Malea, the son of Don Meir, his minister of finance, despite the protest of Pope Nicholas III (1279). The tragic end of Don Zag that involved all the Jews of Castile in misfortune was due rather to Alfonso's unfortunate family relations than to his obedience to the Church. The Infante Don Sancho, who was hostile to his father, once forced the Jewish finance minister to turn over the public funds to him. When the king learned of this incident his wrath knew no bounds; he ordered Don Zag seized at once, thrown into chains, and led through the part of the city in which the residence of the infante was located as a punishment to his son. Don Sancho exerted himself to the utmost to save the Jewish Almoxarif. Alfonso, for this very reason, ordered his execution (1280). But the death of Don Zag did not yet appease the king's anger. He had all the Jews of Castile seized on a Sabbath, imprisoned and fined. Alfonso, however, paid dearly for this outrage. Don Sancho was so indignant at the mistreatment and execution of Don Zag, which he regarded as a personal affront, that he openly rebelled against his father with the support of the majority of the nobles, the people and the clergy. Alfonso died deserted and broken-hearted.

The condition of the Jews under Don Sancho was a tolerable one, and depended upon the king's moods. Don Sancho first adjusted the Jewish taxes for the communities of New Castile, Leon, Murcia, and of the newly conquered provinces of Andalusia. Hitherto each Jew was required to pay for himself

and his family a poll-tax of three maravedi (about 35 cents) in memory of the 30 pieces of silver for which Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus. Don Sancho called an assembly of Jewish deputies in Hueta, fixed the average amount for which each district was to be assessed, and left it to the deputities to regulate among themselves the apportionment of the taxes among the communities and families (1290). The Jews of the kingdom of Castile, who at that time numbered about 850,000 souls, paid an annual tax of 2,780,000 maravedi (about $1,000,000). Christian Spain contained then more than 80 Jewish communities, the most important being that of Toledo which, together with its adjoining small towns, counted seventy-two thousand Jews. The community of Burgos contained about twenty-nine thousand souls, Carrion twenty-four thousand; Cuenca, Valladolid, and Avila also contained important communities. Madrid, which, at that time, was an insignificant town, had three thousand Jews. At times the king exempted especially favored Jews from the payment of taxes. This, however, led to dissensions, since the exemption of such, usually wealthy, men threw a greater burden upon the community and upon the less well-to-do.

The position of the Jews of the young kingdom of Portugal, under Alfonso III (1248-1279) and Diniz (1279-1325) was a favorable one. They were exempted from the canonical laws, the payment of tithes to the priesthood and the wearing of badges, and some among them occupied high offices. King Diniz had a Jewish minister of finance named Judah whom he appointed chief rabbi of Portugal (Arraby Moor) and who was so rich that he was able to advance a considerable sum of money for the purchase of a city. The priesthood, instigated by the papacy, attempted, of course, to change the laws of the land in harmony with the

canonical laws, and this interference led to a serious quarrel between the government and the Church. For the sake of peace, King Diniz finally yielded and introduced the canonical laws which, however, he honored more in the breach than in the observance.

CHAPTER IX

THE PREVALENCE OF FANATICISM AND OF THE CABALA

(1270-1306)

The Jews of the Pyrenean Peninsula, despite the interferences of the Church and of the friars in particular, still occupied a position of importance by virtue of their higher culture and usefulness, and were superior to their coreligionists of other European countries. This superiority found expression also in their religious and intellectual activities. More so than in any other country of Europe, the Jews of Spain took a vital interest in the further development of Judaism, raised religious questions, discussed them, argued over them with passion, and decided them. Here the content of Judaism formed a subject of lively combat, and the achievements of the Spanish Jews gradually became the possession of their coreligionists of other countries. The intellectual vigor of one rabbi, Solomon ben Abraham Ben Adret of Barcelona (about 1245-1310), made Spain again the centre of Judaism for two centuries, as it was in the pre-Maimonidean days. Solomon ben Adret united in

his person a keen and lucid mind, moral earnestness, unswerving devotion to his faith, and kindliness of disposition joined to a firm character. The Talmud, with its labyrinthine passages and hidden corners, with all the novellae and addenda of the Spanish and French schools, lay open before him like a child's primer, and all this vast material he mastered with an ease that excited the admiration of his contemporaries. His lucid mind guarded him against any sophistry in the treatment of the Talmud. As a native of Spain he was not unacquainted with general knowledge, and did not reject philosophy altogether, though he made it only the handmaiden and not the mistress of religion. His philosophic sense demanded a rational interpretation for the objectionable, gross literalness of the Haggadah. At the same time he cherished a profound respect for the cabala, if for no other reason than because his teacher Nahmanides believed in it implicitly, though he regarded it as an esoteric doctrine that is not to be taught in public. It was the task of this man to hold aloft the banner of Judaism in a deeply agitated period, and to combat the vagaries of two extreme tendencies, the philosophic and the cabalistic. For forty years this rabbi of Barcelona was acknowledged the greatest authority in Jewry, and religious questions were directed to him from France, Germany, Bohemia, Poland, Italy, even from St. Jean d'Acre (Acco) in Palestine, and from Northern Africa. This universal respect enjoyed by Ben Adret could not have been due solely to his comprehensive knowledge, because there were many learned rabbis among his contemporaries, and his compatriot Aaron Halevi (about 1235-1300) was his peer. Ben Adret's sole leadership of Jewry was due rather to the incessant zeal with which he defended Judaism against any attack from without or from within.

The clouds charged with destruction that were to pour down upon the heads of the Jews of the Pyrenean Peninsula two centuries later, appeared on the distant horizon already in the time of Ben Adret. The academy established by Raymond de Peñaforte, the general of the Dominicans, that made the provision for the instruction of monks in the Jewish and Arabic literature as a means of conversion, produced a monk, Raymond Martin, who was the first in Europe to employ learning as a weapon for the combat of Judaism. He wrote two books full of venom against the Jews the very titles of which, "A Muzzle for Jews" and "The Dagger of Faith" (Capistrum Judaeorum; Pugio Fidei) indicate their character. Martin was thoroughly versed in biblical and Talmudic literature; he was, in fact, the first Christian who understood the Hebrew even better than St. Jerome. He applied himself diligently to the Talmudic Haggadah, to the writings of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Maimonides and Kimhi in his efforts to prove that the Messiahship and divine sonship of Jesus was indicated not only in the Bible, but also in the rabbinic literature. Although "The Dagger of Faith" was not particularly keen, and the book was rather dull, it made a profound impression because of the great learning it evinced; and its citation from the Talmudic and rabbinic literature, translated into Latin, and thus made accessible to Christians for the first time, served the Dominicans as weapons with which to attack Judaism. Ben Adret regarded this book as dangerous to Judaism; he had frequent discussions with Christian theologians, and, as it seems, with Raymond Martin himself, listened to their assertions and their proofs of the divinity of Christianity, and feared that those arguments might lead the weak and the thoughtless to desert Judaism. To counteract such

a possibility, he wrote a "Little Book" in which he refuted in brief sentences the arguments advanced by the Christians against Judaism. This refutation is written in a remarkably mild and placid tone, and contains not a single sharp or passionate utterance.

Of still greater significance was his activity within Jewry. In Ben Adret's time the process of separation between knowledge and faith made noticeable progress; piety would have less and less to do with thinking, and thinking with religion. In the midst of the passionate conflict of opinions and religious views, the cabala also cast its shadow. The controversy over the question whether or not the writings of Maimonides contained heresies, whether his philosophic writings were to be avoided or even consigned to the flames, broke out anew and stirred the hearts of Jewry again. In Spain and in Southern France, the controversy, indeed, was at an end. The rabbis of these communities venerated Maimonides ever since Mar Jonah of Gerona repented publicly of his persecution of Maimonides, and used his ideas with more or less skill and lucidity for the strengthening of religion. Even the most orthodox Talmudists of Spain and Provence employed the language of Maimonides when they had occasion to discuss their religious views. But in the communities of Germany and Italy a violent controversy between the Maimonists and anti-Maimonists broke out, spread to Palestine and, to some extent, involved all Jewry in the conflict. The Jews of Germany whose entire energies were concentrated upon the Talmud, who knew nothing of the intellectual movements of Montpellier, Saragossa, and Toledo, and who did not even suspect that Maimonides, alongside of his religious code, had also written works of an equivocal character; these German Jews were suddenly

awakened out of their slumber, and made acquainted with the import of the philosophy of Maimonides. Solomon Petit, a French or a Rhenish cabalist who had taken up his residence in Jean d'Acre (Acco), made it the mission of his life to kindle the flames that were to consume the writings of Maimonides, and to erect the standard of the cabala on the grace of philosophy. In Acco, Solomon Petit had gathered about him a number of disciples whom he initiated into the mysteries of the cabala and whom he told strange tales about philosophy in order to render it suspicious. Acco was then a nest of cabalists and obscurantists, under the leadership of the disciples of Nahmanides. Though the days of Acco, the last remnant of the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem, were numbered, the mystics believed to have found a permanent home in that city, and Solomon Petit felt emboldened to entertain the idea of renewing the ban on the works of Maimonides and the excommunication of the independent thinkers. For this crusade against heresy he found adherents in Palestine—and who would dare disobey a call issued from the Holy Land? But the zealot Solomon Petit met with unexpected resistance.

The head of the communities of the Orient was, at that time, an energetic man, Jesse ben Hezekiah, who obtained from the authorities the title of prince and exilarch. The communities of Palestine, in so far as they were in the possession of the Mohammedans and of the Egyptian sultan, were under his jurisdiction, and he laid claim to the obedience of the community of Acco, too, though that city belonged to the crusaders. The exilarch Jesse was an ardent admirer of Maimonides, and a friend of his grandson, the nagid David; and, as soon as he heard of the activities of the Acco mystic, he addressed a threatening letter to him,

and indicated that he would excommunicate him if he dared speak out again in disparagement of Maimonides. Several rabbis, at the instance of the exilarch, expressed themselves to the same effect. But Solomon Petit was not the man to be overwhelmed by obstacles. He undertook a journey to Europe, pointed out to the rabbis and other leaders of the communities the dangers lurking in the works of Maimonides, and persuaded some of them to make common cause with him, and to sign their names to a statement that the philosophic writings of Maimonides were heretical, deserved to be done away with or even burned, and must not be read by any Jew. The German rabbis, in particular, even such who had formerly sided with the exilarch, gave him their support and their written endorsements.

Assured of the assistance of the German and of several French rabbis, Solomon Petit began his return journey to Palestine through Italy, and sought to gain adherents in that country also. Here, however, he met with little success. If Maimonides found new opponents in Germany, he found also new ardent admirers in Italy. The Italian communities, hitherto as ignorant as the German, awoke just at that time from their lethargy, and turned their eyes to the light that radiated from Maimonides. Their political condition was not unfavorable; in fact, more favorable than that of their coreligionists of Central Europe. The restrictive canonical laws were nowhere disregarded so much as in Italy. The petty states and provinces into which Italy was then divided were too jealous of their liberties to permit the Church to interfere in their internal affairs. Thus, the city of Ferrara passed a law that conferred many liberties upon the Jews, and that stated explicitly that these liberties could not be

revoked by the pope or by anybody else. The king of Sicily, Charles of Anjou, had a Jewish physician, Faraj ibn Solomon who was renowned as a scholar in the Christian world also under the name of Faragut. One of the four popes who ruled in the short space of thirteen years (1279-91), despite the canonical law, employed a Jewish physician, Isaac Ben Mordecai, called Maestro Gajo. The prosperity that reigned in Italy in consequence of its flourishing commerce, and the sense of art and poetry that began to stir in Italy in the youth of the poet Dante, reacted also upon the Italian Jews, and awakened them out of their lethargic condition.

The man who stimulated and propagated scientific thinking among Italian Jews was Hillel of Verona (about 1220-1295). Maimonides had no more ardent admirer than this loyal, energetic, somewhat narrow, but all the more lovable man. He was a physician by profession, practicing first in Rome, then in Capua, Ferrara, and, in his old age, in Forli; was thoroughly conservant with the Latin, a rare exception among the Jews of that time, and wrote a fine, clear, concise Hebrew prose, modeled after the Latin, that was free from the empty phraseology and rhetorical flourishes of the Hebrew style of that day. Hillel of Verona devoted all his energies to the religious philosophy of Maimonides, without, however, yielding one iota of his orthodoxy to which he clung rather tenaciously, being a firm believer in the literalness of the miracles narrated in the Bible and in the Talmud. At the same time, there were in Italy two men, Shabbethai ben Solomon of Rome, and Zerahiah ben Isaac of the family of Ibn Shaltiel Hen of Barcelona, who were even profounder thinkers and philosophers than Hillel, and who were passionate opponents of the belief in miracles. In the midst of such intellectual tendencies of the

Italian communities the missionary anti-Maimonistic agitations of the cabalist Solomon Petit could not possibly meet with any sympathy. Upon his return to Jean d'Acre (Acco) with the approbation of the German rabbis in his possession, Solomon Petit sought to encourage his associates to renew the struggle, and to induce them to pronounce the ban upon all who should henceforth occupy themselves with the writings of Maimonides. The young cabala felt itself already so strong that it fancied it could easily banish from Judaism the deeply rooted spirit of investigation. It would seem that it was these cabalists who desecrated the grave of Maimonides in Tiberias by substituting on his tombstone the legend "Moses Maimonides, a heretic and excommunicate." At the same time, not all the members of the Acco community sympathized with the cabalistic agitations against Maimonides; Acco contained a number of ardent admirers of Maimonides who were bitterly opposed to the uncalled-for proceedings of damnation on the part of the cabalists. As a result, a fierce quarrel broke out within the community that led to acts of violence. The news of this conflict soon spread through the countries that were in communication with Palestine and called forth general indignation.

Hillel of Verona developed an energetic activity against the cabalistic inquisitors. He addressed a letter to David Maimonides and to the communities of Egypt and Babylonia (Irak) in which he suggested a plan to terminate forever the dissensions over the writings of Maimonides. He proposed that the leading rabbis of the Orient assemble in a synod in Alexandria, and summon the German rabbis who supported Solomon Petit to vindicate their conduct. If the latter actually prove that the works of Maimonides contain heresies against the

Bible and the Talmud, a supposition which to him was inconceivable, then let those writings be condemned once for all, and withdrawn from circulation. If the German rabbis could hold their ground, they should be compelled to submit, on pain of excommunication, to the general verdict of the excellency of Maimonides' "Guide," and no longer create strife and dissensions. The Babylonian rabbis who enjoyed authority from time immemorial were to be the judges. Circumstances, however, so shaped themselves that the assistance of European rabbis and such energetic measures as proposed by Hillel of Verona were not necessary to frustrate the designs of the obscurantists of Acco. As soon as David Maimonides learned of the attempts to stigmatize his grandfather, he proceeded to Acco, gained the support of that portion of the community that was opposed to the cabalistic inquisitors and appealed to the communities, far and near, to defend the honor of his grandfather against the Jewish Dominicans. His appeal met with a cordial response. The exilarch of Mosul who traced his descent to King David and who was the chief of the communities beyond the Tigris threatened Solomon Petit with excommunication in case he did not desist from his agitations (spring, 1289). This letter was signed by eleven members of his college. The exilarch of Damascus, Jesse ben Hezekiah, who had once before warned the agitators, together with his college of twelve members, pronounced the ban (June, 1289) not directly against Solomon Petit and his partisans, but against all those who dared disparage Maimonides and his writings. Those in possession of anti-Maimonistic literature were ordered to deliver the same to David Maimonides or to his sons within three days. If the present or future immigrants of Acco refuse to submit to the edict of the

exilarch and of his college, every Jew is permitted to employ any means, even to invoke the assistance of the civic authorities, to make them harmless.

The important community of Safed joined in this ban in favor of Maimonides. Its rabbi, Moses ben Judah Kohen, with his college and a portion of the Acco community, repeated on Maimonides' grave in Tiberias the formula of excommunication against those who persisted in their hostility to Maimonides, who refused to deliver the anti-Maimonistic writings, and who refused obedience to the edict of the exilarch in general, "for those who excite dissensions in the communities deny the Torah that teaches peace and blaspheme God who is peace." Accordingly, all communities and rabbis of Palestine took side with the Maimonists. The representatives of the community of Bagdad that was then basking in the sun of an eminent Jewish statesman, Saad Adula, also expressed themselves to the same effect (1289). The cabalists of Acco thus stood condemned in public opinion. The exilarch of Damascus took care to inform the European rabbis also of the ban pronounced upon Solomon Petit. A letter to that effect was sent to Barcelona probably to Solomon ben Adret, as the most eminent rabbi. The philosopher and poet Shem Tob ibn Falaquera embraced this favorable opportunity to publish a vindication of Maimonides' "Guide" in which he insinuated that only very few, possibly only one, who can read the "Guide" in the original, can fully appreciate the value of this work. In Spain, however, Maimonides needed no defender, for none hardly ventured to minimize his greatness. If the very pious occasionally objected to some of his views they nevertheless revered his name.

The German rabbis who supported Solomon Petit had no leisure to pay any attention to the out-

come of the controversy, for, under the reign of the Emperor Rudolph of Hapsburg such fearful calamities befell the communities of Germany that many of them determined to emigrate en masse. This emperor, who was elevated unexpectedly from a poor knight to the rulership of the German empire, had, indeed, no designs upon the lives of the Jews, but plotted all the more to possess himself of their purse since he was ever in need of money with which to establish the dignity of the House of Hapsburg. It is true that the Jews had advanced this poor count, suddenly elevated to the emperorship, considerable sums of money, but this voluntary assistance did not suffice and did not prevent him, either, from extorting larger sums. Every privilege he conferred upon them and every protection he afforded them had inevitably to be preceded by a considerable sum of money. Inasmuch as Rudolph always looked out for his own interests, each favor he bestowed upon the Jews was followed by a restriction in order to hold them always within his power. He confirmed the old privileges of the ancient Regensburg community including the right of the Jews to an independent jurisdiction in civil affairs, and the law that no Jews be accused of offence upon the exclusive testimony of Christians without the corroboration of a Jewish witness; but at the request of the bishop he also issued an edict ordering the Jews of Regensburg to remain shut in in their houses on Easter and not to appear on the streets at that time. He confirmed the Jewish constitution of the Austrian communities granted them by the archduke Frederick the Warlike that was calculated to protect them against acts of violence; but a year later he granted a charter to the burghers of Vienna that solemnly declared the disability of Jews to occupy any public office. He confirmed and repeated all

the edicts issued by the popes in favor of the Jews, including the bull of Innocent IV that absolved the Jews from the charge of child-murder and of Gregory X (1271-8) that admonished Christians not to force Jews into baptism against their will, and not to injure their property or their persons. Nevertheless blood accusations and massacres were of frequent occurrence during his reign, and most of these outrages went unpunished.

The dead body of a Christian child was found near Mayence at Passover time, and the report spread at once that the Jews had murdered it. In vain did the archbishop Werner of Mayence, the arch-chancellor of the empire, attempt to quiet the excited multitude, and to induce it to permit an investigation in order to discover the true criminal. At the sight of the dead child the infuriated Christians killed ten of their Jewish neighbors and plundered Jewish houses on the second day of Passover (1283). The persecution might have resulted in greater bloodshed, had not Archbishop Werner taken energetic measures for the protection of "his" Jews. Rumor had it the emperor Rudolph later investigated the affair and approved of the conduct of the citizens of Mayence. On the same day when the ten Jews were killed in Mayence, twenty-six Jews were killed in Bachrach. Two years later, a fearful calamity befell the Jews of Munich. A rumor spread that the Jews had bought a child from an old woman and murdered it, and a raging mob at once fell upon the Jews and murdered every one who fell into their hands. The rest of the community fled into the synagog; whereupon the Christian mob set fire to the synagog and burned therein one hundred and eighty men, women and children. A short time later, forty Jews were murdered in Oberwesel near Bachrach and others in Boppard (1286). The charge against

them was that they had secretly tapped the blood of a certain holy man who was popularly called "the good Werner." The credulous maintained even that a light radiated from his corpse, and his grave soon became a place of pilgrimage. Later on, however, the emperor Rudolph dissipated both the sanctity of the man and the guilt of the Jews in his death.

It is evident that the false accusations that recurred annually, the uncertainty of their existence, and the hopelessness of their situation led several communities to leave Germany and to emigrate with their families. Many families from the cities of Mayence, Worms, Speyer, Oppenheim and others in the district of Wetterau left their real property to cross the sea. At the head of these emigrants stood the most highly respected rabbi of Germany, R. Meir of Rothenburg on the Tauber (1220-1293) who was regarded as a saint. He, too, left Germany with his entire family, in order to proceed to Syria (Palestine, spring, 1286). Report had it that a Messiah appeared in Palestine, come to redeem Israel. This rumor was possibly based on the fact that their coreligionists were living happily under a Mongolian ruler who placed them above the Mohammedans and who entrusted some of them with important affairs of state.

The Mongols or Tatars had founded a large empire in Persia. Arghun, the third king of this dynasty (1284-91) had a decided aversion to Islam, and an especial predilection for the Jews and Christians. The khan had a Jewish physician named Saad al-Daulah, who was a man of vast knowledge, keen intellect, political insight and unselfish character, and possessed, in addition, a handsome appearance, pleasing manners, and the suavity of a diplomat. He was a lover of poetry and science, and later became their patron. The

Khan, having recovered from a serious illness under the treatment of his Jewish physician, once entered into a discussion of political matters with him, and learned from him many things with reference to the state of the revenues that the officials and the courtiers, actuated by greed, had hidden from him. Since that time, Saad al-Daulah became the khan's favorite and adviser, gradually rose in power, and was finally appointed the first minister of state.

The news of this elevation of a coreligionist may have allured the wretched Jews of Germany and led them to emigrate. Many wealthy German Jews had already crossed the German border; and Meir of Rothenburg, their leader, was already in Lombardy, awaiting the arrival of the flock he was to lead to the Orient. But while in Lombardy, Meir of Rothenburg was recognized by a Jewish apostate, and the emperor Rudolph ordered his detention in the tower of Ensisheim (Alsace, June 19, 1286). Rudolph was intent not upon punishing the fugitive rabbi, but upon preventing his emigration, for he feared that a wholesale emigration of the Jews would impair the imperial revenue. R. Meir's arrest was, therefore, a mere matter of form. He was allowed to receive visitors, instruct his disciples, and exercise all rabbinical functions, but was not allowed to leave the tower. The houses and the fields left by the emigrants in Mayence and in other cities were meanwhile appropriated by the Christian citizens of the respective cities. The emperor, however, insisted that those houses and fields belonged to him, since the Jews themselves were imperial property.

But the Jews of Germany could not rest while their highly revered teacher was in prison, and they offered the emperor twenty thousand marks of silver if he were to punish the murderers of the

Jews of Oberwesel and Boppard, set R. Meir at liberty and guarantee them protection against the violence of the mob. The emperor accepted the offer with its conditions, but R. Meir was not released, either because the emperor wished to make capital out of the great veneration in which R. Meir was held by his coreligionists and use it for the further extortion of money, or because R. Meir himself refused to leave his prison, as it was then told, for fear that this incident might find imitation, and that other rabbis might be imprisoned as a means of extorting money. R. Meir therefore remained in his prison five years, and died there. Rudolph's successors would not permit the interment of his body, until a wealthy childless man of Frankfort, Susskind Alexander Wimpfen, succeeded in ransoming the body for a large amount of money. R. Meir was interred in Worms. The reward that Wimpfen sought for his kindness to the dead was that, upon his own death, he be buried next to R. Meir of Rothenburg.

At this time, the Jews of England also drank the cup of misfortune to its very dregs. Before they were expelled they had to experience the entire gamut of wretchedness. At the ascension of Edward I the Jews had bright prospects for security of existence; for, though Edward was not the man to overlook any offences on the part of the Jews, he was not bent upon exploiting them, and wished to protect them against attacks on the part of the brutal mob. The Jews might have thus remained in England indefinitely, groaning beneath the burden of taxes, and satisfying the demands of the royal treasury by means of extortionate usury, had not a slight incident aroused the bitter hatred of the monks against them. Robert de Reddingge, an eloquent Dominican friar, had acquired a knowledge of Hebrew, in accordance with the policy of

Raymond de Peñaforte, in order to be able to convert the Jews by means of their own literature. But instead of converting the Jews, the friar was himself converted to Judaism, and married a beautiful Jewess, despite the danger to which his apostacy exposed him (summer, 1275). King Edward left his punishment to the archbishop of Canterbury, but it seems that he and his wife succeeded in escaping. But the Dominicans, who regarded Robert's apostasy as a disgrace to their Order and who were mocked at by the people and particularly by their hostile rivals, the Franciscans, determined to wreak their vengeance upon the Jews. Unable to influence the king directly, the Dominicans succeeded in arousing the enmity of the queen-mother Eleanor against the Jews; and, almost against the will of the king, there began for the Jews a series of torments that would seem incredible were it not verified by historic documents. Hitherto, the parliament never concerned itself with the Jews; the latter were regarded as belonging to the king, and the people and the nobles had no authority over them. Since this time, however, instigated by the Dominicans and by the queen-mother, the House of Commons passed a "Statute of Judaism" that breathed altogether the hostile spirit of the Church. An English historian remarked that the Jews of England were treated like their forefathers in Egypt but that instead of bricks they were required to furnish gold. This comparison applies also to the point that like their forefathers in Egypt, nothing was given to them, but the full measure of their task was demanded of them just the same.

The enemies of the Jews soon found occasion to appear against them with a serious charge. Counterfeit money, brought from abroad, was then being circulated in England; and even coins of the realm were often clipped and were of light weight.

The charge was raised at once that the Jews alone were responsible for the making and the circulating of the counterfeit coins. As a consequence, all the Jews of England, with their wives and children, were seized in one day (Friday, Nov. 17, 1278), thrown into prison, and their houses were searched. It developed that many Christians, too, and even members of the London nobility, were guilty of counterfeiting, and that in all England not more than two hundred and ninety-three Jews could be charged with that crime. Nevertheless, more than ten thousand Jews had to expiate for the crimes of the few, and while all the accused Christians with the exception of three, were dismissed with a fine, several hundred Jews were hanged, others were condemned to life imprisonment, and still others were expelled from the country and their property was confiscated. The hatred of the Dominicans did not subside yet. Conscienceless Christians took advantage of the terror of the Jews, and extorted money from them under the threat of denouncing them as counterfeiters. Edward, who saw through this scheme issued an edict (May, 1279) that charges of counterfeiting may be raised only until May of the next year, and thus set a limit to the denunciation.

But the enemies of the Jews never wearied in inventing new charges against them. In Northampton the Jews were accused of crucifying a Christian child. Because of this charge, many Jews of London were torn asunder by horses, and their bodies hanged on the gallows (April 2, 1279). Then a rumor spread that the Jews had blasphemed the cross, the catholic religion, and the mother of God. The king thereupon issued a law (1279) that the blasphemers be put to death; but knowing the character of his subordinates, Edward added that the penalty of death be inflicted only when

the charges are proven by the testimony of impartial and serious men. To drive the Jews to blaspheme in a sense, the Dominicans hit upon a devilish trick; they asked the king's permission to deliver missionary sermons to the Jews, convinced that one or another of the latter, carried away by his zeal for his religion, would make use of some disparaging remark. Edward granted this permission (1280), and admonished the Jews to listen to the preachments of the Dominicans, quietly, without noise, objection or blasphemy. To encourage the conversion of Jews, King Edward established a house for the reception of poor Jewish converts, and provided it with revenues which, however, found their way for the most part in the pockets of the superintendent. A scholastic philosopher of that day proposed another means for the conversion of the Jews. The famous Franscisican monk Duns Scotus, professor at Oxford, who had nourished his mind with the thoughts of the Jewish philosopher, Gabirol, held that it was the duty of the king, in order to attest to his Christian zeal, to take the Jewish children away from their parents by force, and to raise them in the Christian faith, and that it was quite proper to force the parents themselves to accept baptism by means of threats and intimidations. Little by little the fanatical party and the queen-mother gained an ever greater influence over the king who, otherwise, was not unjust, and perverted his sound judgment. This party accused the English Jews before the newly elected pope Honorius IV of being on friendly terms with Christians, of encouraging baptized Jews to return to Judaism, of inviting Christians to attend their synagogs on Sabbaths and holidays, and inducing them to kneel before the Torah, and of enticing them in general to adopt Jewish usages. The pope thereupon addressed a letter to the arch-

bishop of York and to his legates admonishing them to check these evils by all means (Nov., 1286).

The council of Exeter (Apr. 16, 1287) reintroduced all the odious anti-Jewish canonical laws. Fourteen days later the king again ordered all the Jews of England seized and imprisoned, together with their wives and children, and restored them to liberty only upon the payment of a considerable ransom. Three years later (1290), Edward, instigated by his mother, issued an edict on his own authority and without the consent of parliament, expelling all the Jews from England. They were given until November to dispose of their property; any Jew found on English soil later was to be hanged. Before departing they were to return to their owners all the pledges of their Christian debtors. Owing to the constant annoyances to which they were exposed, this decree of expulsion may have been not unwelcome to the English Jews. The king had at least enough consideration to admonish his officials most emphatically not to mistreat the Jews while leaving the country, and the vessel owners of the five ports not to raise the price of passage. Though the respite granted them did not expire until November, 16,511 Jews hastened to leave on the ninth of October the land wherein their forefathers had lived for more than four hundred years. The landed property of which they could not dispose was forfeited to the king. Despite the king's admonition, the banished Jews were subjected to all sorts of mistreatment. One captain of a vessel who was to convey several families to the sea across the Thames, steered his ship to a sand-bank, and made all his Jewish passengers disembark. When the tide rose the captain and his sailors boarded the ship and sailed away, leaving their passengers on the sand-bank, and jeering at them to invoke Moses to lead them dry-shod across

the water. All the victims of this jest perished in the waves. It is true that the cruel captain was afterwards hanged as a murderer, but how many similar outrages may have occurred that went unpunished. The Jews of Gascony that belonged to England were also expelled at the same time. These exiles of Gascomy turned to the adjoining country of France, and were at first admitted by Philip IV (the Fair). In a short while, however, an edict, issued jointly by the king and parliament, decreed that the Jewish exiles of England and Gascomy must leave the French domain by the middle of Lent (end of February, 1291).

As though misfortune had marked all Israel for its own, the brief period of happiness enjoyed by the Jews of Asia through Saad al-Daulah came to a sudden end at this time to their undoing. The Jewish physician who was appointed minister of finance of Persia by the Great Khan Arghun, with the honorary title of Saad al-Daulah (Support of the Kingdom, summer, 1288) and who became the virtual ruler of Persia, served his master with unselfish loyalty, removed the dishonest officials who defrauded the king of his revenues, organized an honest and efficient financial administration, and established justice and order throughout the land. As the Mongolians had as yet no legal code of their own, Saad al-Daulah adopted the Mohammedan civil and penal code, thus facilitating the administration of justice. He supported scholars and poets with a lavish hand, and encouraged them to literary efforts. As Arghun hated the Mohammedans, and instructed his minister to entrust the affairs of the state only to Jews and Christians, Saad al-Daulah naturally gave the preference to his own kinsmen upon whose sympathy and loyalty he could rely. It was probably at his suggestion that Arghun entered into diplomatic relations with Europe and

even with the pope. Arghun expected to be in a position to drive the Mohammedans from Anterior Asia and particularly from Palestine with the help of the Europeans. The pope flattered himself that Arghun might yet seek admission into the bosom of the Catholic Church.

The Oriental Jews were very proud of their co-religionist, and Jews from the most distant countries flocked to the Persian Khanate to bask in the sun of the Jewish minister. But his strict administration and his love of justice and order gained many powerful enemies for Saad al-Daulah. The Mohammedans who had been excluded from every office looked on with suppressed rage at the preferences shown to Jews and Christians whom they regarded as unbelieving dogs, and laid the entire blame upon the shoulder of Saad al-Daulah. Their clergy and scholars still further enraged the Mohammedans against the Jewish minister by spreading a rumor that Saad al-Daulah was cherishing the design of establishing a new religion, and of proclaiming the Khan Arghun as a religious law giver and prophet, that Saad al-Daulah was making preparations to send an expedition to Mecca for the purpose of transforming the holy shrine of the Kaaba into a heathen temple, and of compelling the Mohammedans to become pagans again. The Order of the Assassins, organized for the purpose of removing out of the way the real or supposititious enemies of Islam, had already formed a plot for the destruction of Saad al-Daulah and his kinsmen which, however, was discovered in time and frustrated. Among the Mongolians, too, the Jewish minister had many enemies. The military commanders were angry at him because he had put a stop to their petty tyrannies. Unfortunately, Arghun fell seriously ill (Nov., 1290) and his sickness was the signal for the malcontents to form a

conspiracy against Saad al-Daulah and is favorites. The minister, realizing that his own life depended upon that of his master, sought in vain to cure the stricken Khan. The Mongolian nobles who saw that Arghun was approaching his end, hastened the execution of their conspiracy. They beheaded Saad al-Daulah (March, 1291), murdered all Arghun's favorites, and sent messengers to all the provinces to throw the kinsmen of Saad al-Daulah in chains, to seize their wealth, and to reduce their wives and children to slavery. The Mohammedan population also fell upon the Jews in all the cities of the kingdom to avenge upon them the humiliations they had experienced at the hands of the Mongolians. In Bagdad, a drawn battle between Mohammedans and Jews took place, and dead and wounded fell on both sides.

A few months after these events, the city of Acco, the last stronghold of the crusaders and the scene of conflict between the cabalists and the Maimonists, fell into the hands of the sultan of Egypt (May 18, 1291). The city was taken by storm and a massacre of its inhabitants, Christians as well as Jews, followed. The large Jewish community was annihilated. Most of the Jews fell by the sword, and many were led into captivity.

More deplorable even than the persecutions, expulsions and massacres of the Jews was the effect which the systematic afflictions had upon their spirit. For over two centuries, Jews were the priests of free thought, and cherished and preserved the pure light that was to enlighten future generations. The scholastic philosophy that signified for Europe the dawn of a spiritual awakening received its rays from the focal points of Ibn Gabirol and Maimonides. Even what Christian theology borrowed from the Greeks and the Arabs was made accessible to it only through Jewish

translators and commentators. But this intellectual light within Jewry was darkened for a considerable time by the obscuration of the new mystic doctrine. The cabala, hitherto modest and harmless, now began to intoxicate the head, to delude the sound sense and to lead the weak astray. What it lacked in intrinsic truth and convincingness, it sought to offset by loud presumption and high-sounding delusions. It had already spread from its original home in Gerona and Northern Spain to Southern Spain, and invaded even the Castilian capital Toledo, a community that had formerly taken a firm stand against obscurantism.

Among others in Toledo the cabala gained the adherence of a man who lent to it great prestige by virtue of his noble descent, eminent station and learning. This man was Todros ben Joseph Halevi of the noble Toledan family of Abulafia (1234—after 1304), a nephew of the Meir Abulafia who proved such a stubborn opponent of Maimonides. Todros Abulfia achieved a position of eminence at the court of Sancho IV, and was an especial favorite of the wise queen Maria de Molina either as a physician or financier. The Jews regarded and respected him as a prince. When the king and queen of Spain held a conference in Bayonne, Provence, with Philip the Fair of France for the settlement of mutual difficulties, Todros Abulafia was a member of their retinue, and received on that occasion the most flattering attentions of the Jews of Southern France.

Todros Abulafia was, like his uncle, a decided opponent of philosophy and of its disciples. He could not sufficiently condemn the philosophers who held incredible and impossible everything that could not be proved by logic. He even censured Maimonides, whom he otherwise revered highly, for his opinion that the sacrificial cult was merely a con-

cession to the pagan habits of the people. His particular objection to philosophy was that it denied the existence of evil spirits which to him was tantamount to a denial of the Bible and the Talmud. Initiated into the cabala, he regarded it as divine wisdom the lifting of whose veil by a layman was connected with danger. His two sons, Levi and Joseph, likewise absorbed themselves in the cabala. The recognition given to the cabala by such an eminent person could not but exert an influence. Two of the three cabalists of his time who further developed the cabala and succeeded in spreading it throughout Jewry, joined Todros Abulafia, and dedicated their writings to him.

The three cabalists of first rank who advanced new theories with more or less success were Isaac ibn Latif, Abraham Abulafia and Moses de Leon, all Spaniards, and it was these men who obscured the intellectual light within Judaism by a cloud of riotous fancies, and substituted a fantastic, nay blasphemous, delusion for pure faith. The mental darkness of the following centuries within Jewry was their work to a large extent. They led their own generation and posterity astray by an intentional or unintentional imposture, and the injuries they wrought to Judaism are still felt to this day. Abraham ibn Latif (about 1220-90) was the least pernicious of the three, for he had a superficial acquaintance with philosophy, and, compared with his contemporary Abraham Abulafia, who sought to change the order of the universe by means of cabalistic juggleries, he may be regarded as a sober thinker.

Abraham Abulafia (b. 1240 in Saragossa; d. after 1291) was an eccentric character full of confused ideas. A lover of the adventurous, his whole life, from the time he reached man's estate, was a series of adventures. He undertook an adventurous

journey for the purpose of discovering, according to his own statement, the mythical river Sabbation on whose shores the ancient tribes of Israel were reputed to live; on his way to Palestine he married a young woman in Greece, and, like a true adventurer, soon left his wife and proceeded to Acco. As the Mongolians had devastated Syria and Palestine, Abulafia had to give up his plan of penetrating further into Asia, returned to Europe with his wife, lived for a while in Italy, and finally, at the age of thirty-three, settled in Spain where he applied himself seriously to the study of the cabala, and absorbed himself in the enigmatic "Book of Creation." As a result of these studies he was beset by confused ideas, saw fantastic pictures and strange phenomena, and his mind was in a constant turmoil. The only idea that stood out clear in his mind was that philosophy affords no certainty and therefore no satisfaction to the spirit that is yearning for truth. Even the ordinary cabala did not satisfy his mind, because, like philosophy, it appeared to him as nourishing only the arrogance of knowledge. Abraham Abulafia aimed at something higher, at prophetic revelation that alone, without the toilsome path of gradual acquisition of knowledge, opens up the very source of truth. This he believed himself to have achieved at last. He believed that, through divine inspiration, he had come upon the higher cabala by which alone it was possible to enter into intimate relation with the spirit of the universe, and thus attain the gift of prophecy. The means by which this object could be accomplished was the dissection and transposition of biblical verses, and particularly the name of God, in order to form new words out of them, or the treatment of letters as numbers (Gematria). But this alone was not sufficient. Whoever aspires to become worthy of prophetic revelation must lead an ascetic

life, must hold aloof from the turmoil of the world, must seek the seclusion of a quiet chamber, free his mind of all sordid cares, garb himself in white, wear his praying shawl and phylacteries, and place his soul in an attitude of devotion as though it was to appear for an interview with God. In this connection, one must pronounce the name of God with shorter or longer pauses, and with modulations of the voice, or write it down in a certain series, accompanied by certain movements, bows and twisting of the body until the senses become confused and the heart is filled with fervor. The body will then be overcome by sleep, and a sensation will be experienced as though the soul were to separate from the body. In this condition, if prolonged by practice, the divine effluence pours forth into the human soul, unites with it "in a kiss," and prophetic revelation is its natural consequence. Abulafia claimed that his cabala was revealed to him in this manner, and he regarded it as a divine revelation by virtue of which he alone was enabled to penetrate into the secrets of the Torah. The understanding of the plain meaning of the Scriptures and the mere practice of religious commandments were intended solely for immature minds, as milk for children; the ripe minds, on the contrary, will discover the higher wisdom only in the numerical significance and in the manifold transformations of the letters of the divine name.

Such was his higher cabala, in contradistinction to the superficial or lower cabala which he ridiculed as teaching a sort of unity of ten instead of the Christian trinity. So great already was the mental deterioration at that time, that this half insane enthusiast found many older and younger disciples. Two of his disciples, Moses Gikatilla and Samuel "the Prophet," both of Medina-Celi, proclaimed themselves publicly as prophets and

miracle-workers. Eager to spread his doctrines, Abulafia left his native land a second time, and proceeded to Italy where he expected to gain a larger following. He first appeared in Orbino (1279) with a book for which he claimed prophetic origin, and announced that God had spoken to him. While in Italy, he hit upon the insane idea of attempting to convert to Judaism the then pope, Martin IV (1281), was imprisoned for a while, and escaped death by fire only because, as he expressed it, God had endowed him with a double tongue. He possibly suggested to the pope that he. too, was teaching the trinity. From Rome Abulafia proceeded to Sicily. In Messina he finally proclaimed himself not merely a prophet but a Messiah, and announced that the Messianic redemption was to occur in the year 1290. Messianic fancies ever throve on mystic soil.

His ascetic life, his revelations clothed in obscure formulas, and possibly also his audacity, gained for Abulafia many dupes in Sicily who began to make preparation for the return to the Holy Land. But clear-headed men of the Sicilian community had their doubts, and turned to Solomon ben Adret for information concerning Abraham Abulafia. The rabbi of Barcelona, who was familiar with Abulafia's former doings, addressed an earnest letter to the community of Palermo in which he condemned the alleged Messiah as a sciolist and dangerous character. Abulafia tried to defend himself against Adret's charges, but other rabbis and communities, fearing the consequences of a Messianic agitation, pronounced the ban upon him, and he was compelled to leave Sicily. Embittered by his persecutions, Abulafia condemned his coreligionists, who, in their deafness, would not listen to him: "While the Christians believe in my words, . . . the Jewish wise men persist in their unbelief, refuse to

count (the numerical value of) the name of God but prefer to count their gold." The Talmudic scholars he called pedants.

Abulafia's end is unknown. He left at least twenty-two so-called prophetic books which, though the products of a diseased brain, were utilized by later cabalists. His eccentricities, however, found imitation and led to sad consequences for his own generation. In Spain two enthusiasts appeared simultaneously, one of whom was probably a disciple of Abulafia, one in the little town of Ayllon (Segovia), the other in the large community of Avila, both of whom claimed to be prophets, and announced in mystic terms the approach of the Messianic kingdom. Both found followers. The miracle reported of the prophet of Avila, namely, that though he was an ignoramus, he wrote a book at the dictation of an angel, excited great wonder, and led the community of Avila to consult Solomon ibn Adret, the highest authority of that age, as to whether or not they should believe in the new prophet. Solomon ibn Adret, though an adherent of the cabala, believed only in the miracles narrated in the Bible and in the Talmud. He, therefore, replied that, in his own opinion, the prophet of Avila was an impostor unless the miracle reported of him could be proved by honest and reliable men. Prophecy was impossible outside of Palestine; the age was not worthy of prophetic revelation, and the prophetic spirit could not descend upon a totally ignorant man. It was inconceivable that a man retiring at night as an idiot should arise in the morning as a prophet. He, therefore, advised that the incident in question be subjected to a thorough and impartial investigation.

But despite this warning on the part of the greatest rabbi the prophet of Avila continued his activities, and designated the last day of the fourth

month (1295) as the beginning of the Messianic redemption. The credulous and ignorant multitudes made preparations for that event, fasted and distributed alms generously in order to be found worthy of participation in the Messianic kingdom. On the appointed day, however, the dupes, clad in white as on the Day of Atonement, hastened to the synagog to await there the trumpet of the Messianic redemption. No sign appeared; instead of a miracle it is said that the assembled crowd noticed a small cross on their garments, and this partly frightened and partly sobered them. It is possible that the unbelieving element of the community secretly fastened a cross on the garments of the prophet's dupes either as a jest, or in order to call their attention whither this Messianic imposture might lead and thus cure them of their delusion. It is said that some of the deluded dreamers actually embraced Christianity while others were filled with despair and remorse because they could not account for the appearance of the cross on their garments. What became of the prophets or self-deluded impostors of Ayllon and Avila is not recounted. Like Abraham Abulafia, they disappeared, and have some importance only as an excrescence of a diseased condition.

The third cabalist of this period, Moses de Leon, exerted by far a greater and more pernicious influence upon his own time and upon posterity than Al-Latif, Abulafia and the false Messiahs; for although he was unmasked by his contemporaries, he succeeded in foisting upon Jewish literature a cabalistic work that became the foundation of the Cabala and its crowning glory. Moses ben Shem Tob de Leon (born in Leon 1250; died in Aravelo, 1305), was an impostor beyond doubt, though it is uncertain whether he practised his imposition for selfish purposes or as a pious fraud; he stands,

therefore, far beneath Abulafia, who, at any rate, was honest and naïve in his delusion. A sciolist who understood thoroughly neither the Talmud nor other branches of knowledge, he possessed the knack of using skillfully the little that he knew, of writing easily and fluently, of bringing into combination the remotest things and the biblical verses that were stored up in his memory, and of coupling them with ready wit. Even the Cabala he did not master as a system; he knew only its phraseology and catchwords, and worked them up very skilfully.

Leading a life of reckless extravagance, without making provisions for the future of his wife and daughter, Moses de Leon expected to find a rich source of revenue in a literary activity in the field of the cabala that had come into vogue. He wandered from place to place, and first published his works under his own name. However, as his writings brought him neither fame nor fortune, he determined to ascribe his future cabalistic works to a celebrated name of the past, these works, of course, to bear all the earmarks of antiquity. De Leon felt assured of a rich reward when he proved that he was in sole possession of such a treasure. Moses de Leon knew well the credulity of the cabalists and the eagerness with which they listened to every cabalistic word that purported to be handed down from antiquity. Did not the cabalistic brothers, Ezra and Azriel, succeed in passing off their forgery, the book of "Bahir," as a revelation dating back from Talmudic times? Moses de Leon was looking for a still more appropriate person as the bearer of the mystic doctrine against whom no objection could be raised; and the Tanaite Simon ben Yohai, who was alleged to have spent thirteen years in a cave, and whom already the ancient mysticism credited with having received revelations

from the angel Metatoron, seemed to him to be the very best authority for the cabala. However, Simon ben Yohai must not be made to speak or to write Hebrew, for, in that case, the cabalists would recognize the echo of their own words; he must be made to express himself in Aramaic, a language vague in itself, adapted for mysteries, an echo of a different world. And so there came into the world the cabalistic book "Zohar" (Splendor), a book that was idolized by Jews for centuries as a divine revelation, and regarded by Christians, too, as an ancient tradition, and in part, still regarded as such to this day. Certain it is that no open forgery ever met with such a great success; but Moses de Leon knew how to produce the desired effect upon credulous readers. Simon ben Yohai is made to appear in the book of "Zohar" in a halo of glory, and his revelations are imparted to a circle of chosen disciples (now twelve, now six), "the intelligent who shine as the glory of heaven."

The "Zohar" glorifies its author to an extravagant degree, calling him the "holy light," towering even above Moses, "the faithful shepherd." This self-deification (that in itself betrays the forger) was scattered through the book for the purpose of meeting the question: "How did this mysterious wisdom, unknown to the cabala for ages, and kept secret by careful cabalists, happen to see the light of day all of a sudden, and made accessible to everybody?" The "Zohar" states repeatedly that the reason why it is permitted to lift the veil that had covered this mysterious wisdom so long was that the times were especially meritorious and deserving of mercy, and that the Messianic kingdom was nigh.

There is hardly a book in existence that bears comparison with the "Zohar" in the influence it wielded and in the oddity of its contents and form. It is a book without a beginning and end; and it is

impossible to tell whether the parts that constitute it at present belonged to it originally, were added to it later, or are only a fragment of the original. It is composed of three main parts with supplements and commentaries, thrown together in a jumble of confusion, and written in empty but high-sounding phrases. One does not know whether the "Zohar" is to be regarded as a running commentary on the Pentateuch, a manual of theosophy, or a collection of cabalistic homilies; and its contents are as void and formless as its external form. Here and there it makes an attempt to state a lucid thought, but in the twinkling of an eye it disappears into feverish fancies, or degenerates into puerilities.

The fundamental thought of the "Zohar," if it contain any thought at all, is that the Torah, with its narratives and commandments, is by no means to be understood in its simple sense, but aims at something higher, mysterious, supersensible. "Is it conceivable," one of Simon ben Yohai's disciples is made to exclaim, "that God had nothing higher to impart than the common narratives of Esau and Hagar, of Laban and Jacob, and of Balaam's ass? Does a collection of such narratives, comprehended in their literal sense, deserve the name of Torah?" Simon ben Yohai, or rather Moses de Leon, remarks: "If the Torah contains only such simple things, we, today, might be able to produce a similar if not better book." No. The truth of the Torah consists in its higher, mystic sense. The biblical narratives are like unto a pretty robe that so entrances the fools that they seek nothing further behind it. However, the robe covers a body, while the biblical narratives hide a soul, the higher soul. "Woe unto those guilty ones who assert that the Torah contains only simple stories, and thus look at the garb. Blessed are the pious who seek

for the true meaning of the Torah. The wine is not the vessel, so is the Torah not merely its narratives." In this way, the mysteries of de Leon have free scope, and one can hardly conceive to what an extent the "Zohar" abuses the simple sense of the Scriptures.

The "Zohar" loves to indulge particularly in fancies upon that side of man that must ever remain a riddle to him, the question of the nature of the soul, its genesis and departure, and ventures to describe what happens to the soul during sleep. Another favorite topic of the "Zohar" is the darker side of life, sin, impurity. On the border of the world of light there is formed a world of darkness that surrounds the former as a shell surrounds the kernel of a fruit. The original evil with its ten gradations the Cabala designates metaphorically as "shell" (Kelipa). All the evil-doers and miscreants mentioned in the Bible are regarded by the "Zohar" as children of the evil principles, of "the shells" (Kelipot): such are the serpent, Cain, Esau, Pharaoh, Esau's kingdom, Rome, and also the medieval spiritual and temporal power of Christianity that is based upon force and injustice. Israel and the pious, on the other hand, belong to the world of light. "Whoever follows the left side (of sin), attracts the impure spirits to himself that cling to him and would not depart from him." On this point the "Zohar" resembles the Zendavesta of the Parsees. The intimate relation of the soul either with the light or with the darkness, the "Zohar" describes in carnal terms under the image of conjugal union, just as, on the whole, it teaches the existence of the male and the female principle in the higher world, too, and even in the deity itself. So long as Israel is in exile, the divine unity is, in a sense, defective and broken; God will become one only in those days when the mistress (Mat-

ronita), the cabala, will become united with the king, God.

Moses de Leon's work would have been incomplete if it had failed to discuss and foretell the Messianic era, the keystone of the cabala. In this connection, however, the forger betrayed himself. Instead of placing the Messianic era at a time or a year that would correspond to Simon ben Yohai's age (in the second century), the "Zohar," by playing with letters and numbers, places it in the beginning of the fourteenth century, that is, in his own time. Moses de Leon wished to excite the hopes of his contemporaries that they would yet see the Messianic era with their own eyes. Possibly he was oppressed by Messianic delusions as much as Abraham Abulafia.

Much as the "Zohar" strives to elevate rabbinic Judaism, and to give to its most insignificant custom a higher, mystic meaning, it nevertheless carps at and disparages the Talmud, though it does it covertly, ambiguously, and with an air of the utmost innocence. In the first place, it places the study of the cabala far above that of the Talmud or even that of the Bible. The cabala possesses a buoyancy that can raise itself aloft to the very innermost secrets of the deity, while the Talmud has only clipped wings and cannot raise itself to the higher knowledge. The "Zohar" likens the Talmud to a humble slave; the cabala, on the other hand, to an imperious mistress. The study of the Talmud resembles a hard, barren rock which, if struck, will yield a few drops of water that would give rise to quarrels and discussions; the cabala, on the other hand, is a perennial fountain that needs only a word to pour forth its refreshing and vivifying contents.

The publication of the "Zohar" produced a tremendous sensation among the cabalists. They

seized upon it eagerly, and besieged de Leon with requests for copies. The question how he came in the possession of such a great work of an ancient sage of which nothing was hitherto known was answered by the assertion that Nahmanides had discovered it in Palestine and sent it to Catalonia, whence it was carried by a storm to Aragon, and fell into the hands of Moses de Leon who alone was in possession of the original copy. The fame of the newly discovered cabalistic treasure spread throughout Spain. The circle of Todros Abulafia at once accepted the "Zohar" as the genuine work of Simon ben Yohai, and Moses de Leon's expectations were more than fulfilled. There were, indeed, some cabalists who doubted Simon ben Yohai's authorship of the "Zohar," but they accepted the book itself as a pure source of the cabala. However, when the cabalist Isaac of Acco, who had escaped the massacre at the conquest of that city, arrived in Spain and saw the "Zohar," he was so impressed with it that he became all the more curious to ascertain whether the book was genuine, particularly so since he was born and reared in Palestine, and was in frequent touch with the disciples of Nahmanides without having heard a word about the wonderful work of Simon ben Yohai in the possession of Nahmanides. Isaac of Acco met Moses de Leon in Valladolid, and the latter swore solemnly that in his home in Avila he really had the original copy written by Simon ben Yohai, and promised to submit it to him for inspection. Meanwhile, Moses de Leon fell sick and died, and his death veiled the origin of the "Zohar" in still greater obscurity. However, two trustworthy men learned the naked truth from his wife and daughter that Moses de Leon was himself the author of the "Zohar," that he had written it with his own hand, and had copied it extensively in order to derive a large revenue

from it. Thus, his own wife and daughter, without realizing the import of their surely incontestable testimony, exposed Moses de Leon as a forger. Nevertheless, the "Zohar" continued to find favor in the eyes of the cabalists.

The prophecy de Leon put into the mouth of Simon ben Yohai "that many would flock to the standard of the Zohar as soon as it was published and would nurture their spirit with it to the end of the days" was fulfilled immediately after his death. Though the "Zohar" taught the cabalists nothing essentially new, it presented the ideas familiar to them in such a striking form and language that it could not but make a deep impression upon them. Everything in the "Zohar" aims at producing an effect, at captivating the imagination; it is tinkling brass. The long conversations between Simon ben Yohai and his disciples, or the faithful shepherd Moses at times produces a dramatic effect; effective, and to the believer even thrilling, are the frequent exclamations in the "Zohar": "Woe, woe unto those who do or do not believe or pay heed to this or that." Here and there the "Zohar" contains brief prayers written in a noble, lofty strain that is calculated to fill the soul with a mysterious awe. Thus there insinuated itself into Judaism a new sacred book that made the cabala, unknown a century before, the equal, if not the superior, of the Bible and the Talmud. It is true that the "Zohar" rendered Judaism one service; by appealing to the imagination, and by developing a certain poetic frame of mind, it counterbalanced the legal dryness and the matter-of-factness of the study of the Talmud; but the harm it wrought to Judaism outweighs this service by far. The "Zohar" propagated wretched superstitions, and established the kingdom of Satan, of evil spirits, and ghosts. Moreover, the "Zohar" con-

tains utterances that sound favorable to the Christian belief in the trinity.

To the perversion of the Scriptures that characterized the cabalists, the so-called philosophers of this period contributed their share too. Maimonides' method of harmonizing Judaism with reason, of giving a philosophic or at least a tolerable meaning to too objectionable biblical views and of assigning a rational purpose to every religious commandment, encouraged the would-be philosophers of this period to explain everything in the same way; and, like the Alexandrian Hellenists, they followed the allegoric method beyond measure and belief. The psuedo-philosophers divested the history of the creation and of the patriarchs of their original character, and reinterpreted them in terms of philosophic platitudes. Bolder spirits went even beyond this point, and derived conclusions from philosophic premises that tended to undermine Judaism. Holding with their forerunners, the Alexandrian allegorists, that the sole purpose of the ritual laws was to inculcate certain religious, philosophic or ethical ideas, they came to the conclusion that the mere possession of such theories was sufficient, and that the practices of religious prescriptions was altogether superfluous. Some of these philosophers denied the prophetic character of Moses, and regarded him as an ordinary legislator, such as other peoples also produced. Such extreme views, endangering the entire structure of Judaism, called forth a reaction that regarded all criticism as pernicious.

The leader of this school of allegorists was Levi ben Hayyim of Villefranche, near Perpignan (1240-1305). A man of erudition but of whimsical nature, he unconsciously became the cause of violent friction. A member of a scholarly family, he was well versed in the Talmud, but attached

greater importance to the philosophy of Maimonides and to the astrology of Ibn Ezra. He was not, however, an original thinker, and did not possess a thorough comprehension of Maimonides' teachings. To Levi ben Hayyim, Judaism dissolved itself in mere philosophic commonplaces, insipid and puerile, which, strange to say, were admired by his contemporaries as profound wisdom. The seat of this psuedo-philosophy was the important community of Perpignan, the capital of the district of Roussillon that belonged to the kingdom of Aragon. Although the Jews of this city lived under no enviable conditions, and were compelled to occupy a wretched part of the city, the one assigned to the lepers, they none the less preserved their fondness for knowledge and free criticism, and listened eagerly to the innovations taught by the commentators of Maimonides. Even the rabbi of Perpignan was a man of a critical turn of mind and a decided enemy of the narrow-minded orthodoxy and of the unthinking piety that submitted implicitly to the letter of the law. This rabbi was Don Vidal Menahem ben Solomon Meiri (1249-1320), a man unknown to fame in his day, and not an epoch-making personality, but an important and interesting phenomenon just the same. He possessed what his Jewish contemporaries sadly lacked: moderation and tact. These qualities are evident above all in Meiri's style.

This philosophic-allegoristic interpretation of Judaism was publicly taught in Perpignan and in other places, and preached from the pulpit. The poverty-stricken Levi of Villefranche found a place of refuge in Perpignan with the wealthy and prominent Don Samuel Sulami or Sen Escalita, a man who was inordinately extolled by his contemporaries for his piety, erudition and generosity. Don Samuel conducted a learned correspondence with

Solomon ibn Adret, but was nevertheless fond of the philosophic interpretation of the Bible and the Haggadah. Meiri was, of course, dissatisfied with the extreme tendency of the allegorists, but he was not willing to oppose scientific pursuits because of the abuses to which they were subjected.

These proceedings, however, were not regarded with equanimity by several zealots of Montpellier, the home of the obscurant Solomon, the inquisitor of Maimonides and his writings who was the cause of schisms and evil. Although these psuedo-philosophic excrescenses were by no means more noxious than the cabalistic absurdities, these zealots calmly allowed the latter to thrive but declared a vehement war upon the former, giving them thereby greater weight than they possessed intrinsically. They came within a hair's breadth of kindling anew the fires of dissension. The prime mover of this ill-timed war was one of those men who are ready to condemn as a heretic any one who deviates in the least from the straight line of religious belief which they set for themselves, and to destroy him by means of the ban, and, when possible, by fire and sword; men whose fanatical zeal is inseparable from a sort of egotism. This man was Abba Mari ben Moses of Montpellier, with the aristocratic name of Don Astruc de Lunel, a member of a prominent family, and of great weight in the capital of Languedoc. Abba Mari Don Astruc was not, indeed, devoid of education; he was moreover a great admirer of Maimonides and of his writings; but he had once for all formed a definite idea of the content of Judaism after the Nahmanidean pattern, and felt outraged when anyone dared apply a different standard. He loathed not alone the allegoric method of interpretation which was preached publicly, but also the study of profane literature in general as the source of these vagaries. He expressed

a regret that he did not possess the power "to annihilate all who occupy themselves with secular science which is a menace to religion."

As Abba Mari did not possess sufficient authority to proceed against Levi of Villefranche and his congeners, he turned to Solomon ibn Adret of Barcelona, the most eminent rabbi of his generation, formulated the charge against them that they were endangering the future of Judaism by their perversities if a stop be not put to them, and appealed to him to raise his influential voice against them. Ibn Adret naturally found it similarly deplorable that "strangers broke into the gates of Zion." He urged Abba Mari to unite with his associates in an effort to check the frenzy of the allegorists, but declined to lend his personal assistance because he was averse to interfering in the affairs of other communities. Other zealots, however, took the matter up, and proposed a compromise that was received with much favor. The pursuit of scientific studies and the reading of profane literature in general were to be interdicted to the Jewish youth up to thirty years of age; only mature men whose minds had already been filled with the Bible and the Talmud were to be permitted to warm themselves at the strange fire of philosophy and of natural science.

Although Ibn Adret did not care to take a decisive stand against the cultivation of science, he regarded it his duty to persecute Levi of Villefranche, the cause of all this vexation. He took the pious Samuel Sulami to task for harboring the heretic in his house, thereby giving him the opportunity of propagating his pernicious doctrines; and so worked on his religious scruples that the pliable Sulami renounced his former convictions, and denied Levi his hospitality. But this inquisitorial procedure aroused the indignation of many members of the Perpignan community. The latter ex-

culpated Ibn Adret, whom they knew as a man of spotless character, and turned their wrath upon Abba Mari whom they suspected of unholy motives. Abba Mari and his associates, who were powerless without influential support, worked incessantly, meanwhile, to arouse the zeal of Ibn Adret to the point of interdicting all secular knowledge. Ibn Adret acquiesced, and addressed a letter to Abba Mari to that effect. But as soon as this scheme became known in Montpellier, the influential element of the community raised a decided protest against it.

The head and front of this opposition in Montpellier was Jacob ben Machir Tibbon, known in Christian circles as Don Profiat and Profatius (1245—after 1312) who was a man of great influence by virtue of his descent, position, wealth and knowledge. He was related to the Tibbonides, and was brought up to regard Judaism and science as twin sisters who lived on the most intimate terms. Like all educated Jews of that time, he was familiar with Jewish literature, the Bible and the Talmud, followed medicine as his vocation, and devoted himself with particular zeal to mathematics and astronomy. Having acquired the knowledge of the Arabic language, too, he was in a position to translate into Hebrew useful, scientific works from that language. Profiat also occupied a high rank in the medical faculty of Montpellier. And this man it was who was expected to lend a hand to the banishment of science from Jewish circles, for, without his great influence in the community, Abba Mari's scheme of interdicting the study of the sciences to the Jewish youth was foredoomed to failure in Montpellier. As was to be expected, Profiat not only declined to give his co-operation to Abba Mari's scheme, but called the attention of the zealots to the deplorable consequences to which such

a step would lead, and urged upon them to refrain from publishing Ibn Adret's letter. Abba Mari and his associates, however, refused to yield, and read Ibn Adret's letter at a mass meeting of the members of the community held in the synagog on a Sabbath (August, 1304). But it was evident at once that the zealots were mistaken or immoderate in their assertion to Ibn Adret that all the Jews of Montpellier were unanimous in their condemnation of science. Jacob Tibbon and his followers raised a vehement protest against the attempt at intellectual enslavement. Violent debates took place on that occasion, and the assembly adjourned without taking any decisive action. The community soon split into two parties; the enlightened element embraced the cause of Jacob Tibbon, the obscurantists that of Abba Mari. Each side sought adherents within and without the community.

With Abba Mari it became a point of honor to carry the day, and he therefore exerted himself to the utmost to obtain at least twenty-five signatures from members of the community in order to convince Ibn Adret that he did not stand entirely alone in his zeal. But with Jacob Tibbon also it was a point of honor not to permit the interdiction of science. He and the Tibbonides believed that the attack was aimed directly at their highly revered ancestors; at Samuel ibn Tibbon and Jacob Anatoli because the latter's collection of homilies was the first to stimulate the allegoric method in its application to biblical narratives and to ritual ordinances, and was then used in certain circles for Sabbatical edification. Samuel ibn Tibbon, the translator of Maimonides and the propagator of his ideas, was, indeed, held in but little esteem by the zealots. His great-grandson, Judah ben Moses, was therefore one of the leaders of the party, which one may name the Tibbonide, that opposed Abba

Mari. To gain adherents for their cause, the Tibbonides, on their part, circulated the report that the opponents of science were aiming again to pronounce Maimonides and his writings heretical, that Abba Mari aimed at emulating Solomon of Montpellier. This proved a successful strategy; it won for the Tibbonides the support of those who had hitherto remained indifferent to the point at issue, because these men, too, believed it their duty to enter the lists for the vindication of Maimonides' honor.

The Tibbonides, strengthened by the acquisition of new adherents, addressed a peremptory letter to Ibn Adret and his Barcelona board, demanding a change of attitude. Though their arguments for the admissibility of science within Judaism were not striking, they proved sufficiently conclusive for that superficial age. The rejoinder that the interdict was directed not at science in general but at its study on the part of immature young men they ridiculed as an evasion of the main issue. A person who had formed no acquaintance with science up to his thirtieth year is no longer susceptible to it. They protested, in general, against being branded as heretics because they cultivated profane sciences in addition to the Torah. They yielded to no one in piety and orthodoxy. In conclusion they exhorted Ibn Adret and his board to sheathe the sword of intolerance and of dissension.

This defiant tone irritated the Barcelonians very deeply, and the tension was still more heightened as a result. Embittered and virulent letters passed to and fro. Both sides exerted themselves to gain new adherents in the other communities. The representatives of the communities of Argentière, Aix, Avignon and Lunel voted to embrace the cause of Abba Mari. In Perpignan, the chief seat of the enlightenment that was so bitterly attacked, a kins-

man of Abba Mari agitated in his favor, and made special efforts to gain the support of Kalonymos ben Todros, a native of Narbonne, who carried great weight in the community by virtue of his noble descent, his eminence and his fame. After some hesitation Kalonymos yielded to the importunities of Abba Mari and of Ibn Adret, and promised his co-operation. However, as the party of the Tibbonides also had meanwhile gained new adherents, even Solomon ibn Adret began to waver, and refused to issue the decree of excommunication unless twenty communities at least declared themselves unequivocally in its favor.

While the struggle in Southern France and in Spain for and against the admissibility of scientific studies in Jewish circles was still hanging in the balance, the tragic events that just then occurred in the German communities drove to Spain a great personality who turned the scale in favor of the suppression of all critical, scientific pursuits. This man, Asher or Asheri, was a person of rare altruism, of pure motives, sincere religiousness and profound Talmudic scholarship, but he shared with his countrymen their fanatical hatred of profane knowledge, and almost surpassed Abba Mari in this respect. Asheri's arrival in Spain marks the beginning of the cultural decline of the Spanish and Provençal Jews.

Asher ben Jehiel (about 1250-1327), a native of the Rhine region, was a descendant of an ancestry whose life was devoted exclusively to the Talmud. A disciple of the celebrated Meir of Rothenburg, Asheri acquired the ingenious dialectics of the Tosafists, but had a finer sense of method and of order than that school. After the death of his teacher whose body the conscienceless emperor Adolph of Nassau refused to deliver for interment without the payment of a ransom, Asheri became

the acknowledged rabbinical authority in Germany. In his time, the Jews of Germany experienced another reign of terror that far surpassed in its cruelty that of the crusades; it robbed thousands of innocent human beings of their lives, or delivered them over to a fate that was worse than death. The civil war then raging in Germany between Adolph of Nassau and Albrecht of Austria over the succession to the empty imperial dignity deprived the Jews of all protection. A pretext for an attack upon them was easily found. A report was circulated that the Jews of the little town of Röttingen (in Franconia) had desecrated a host and beat it in a mortar so that the host bled. A nobleman of that place, named Rindfleisch, espoused the cause of the alleged desecrated host, proclaimed himself appointed by God to annihilate the accursed race of Jews, and gathered about him the credulous and brutalized rabble to assist him in his bloody work. He and his band first fell upon the members of the community of Röttingen, and burned them alive (April 20, 1298). From there the mob under Rindfleisch rolled on from town to town, augmented by similarly minded ruffians, and murdered all the Jews who fell into their hands upon their refusal to embrace Christianity. Spurred on by audacious courage and simulated inspiration, Rindfleisch forced the burghers of the cities to massacre their Jewish fellow citizens. The populous community of Würzburg was annihilated completely (July 24). In Nürzburg, the Jews at first fled into a castle, and defended themselves against the mob with the assistance of humane Christians; they were, however, overcome and slain to the last man (Aug. 1). R. Mordecai ben Hillel, Asheri's kinsman and fellow student at Meir of Rothenburg's academy, the author of a valuable rabbinic compilation, fell a martyr in Nürnberg, together with

his wife and five children. Many parents, for fear that their children might not remain steadfast in their faith out of fear of death, cast them into the flames with their own hands, and jumped into the fire themselves. In Bavaria, the communities of Regensburg and Augsburg alone escaped the massacre.

The bloody persecution conducted by Rindfleisch, continuing nearly six months, moved on from Franconia and Bavaria to Austria, brought ruin upon more than one hundred and forty communities, and cost the lives of one hundred thousand Jews. All the other Jews of Germany trembled for their lives, and resigned themselves to a similar fate. They would, indeed, have perished had not the civil war in Germany terminated by the death of the emperor Adolph and the election of Albrecht. The second Hapsburg emperor who rigorously restored peace in Germany brought to account those who had laid violent hands upon the Jews, and imposed heavy fines upon the cities involved on the ground that the imperial treasury sustained a loss by the destruction of the imperial bondsmen (the Jews) and their property. Most of the Jews who had submitted to baptism in the midst of the terror returned to Judaism, with the connivance, it seems, of the emperor and even of the representatives of the Church.

After these bloody massacres, Asheri felt insecure in Germany, and he was possibly threatened by another danger on the part of Emperor Albrecht. It is said that the emperor demanded from him the sum of money which the Jews had promised to pay as a ransom for Meir of Rothenburg and which Asheri guaranteed. He therefore left Germany (summer, 1303), wandered with his wife and eight sons from country to country, was everywhere treated with the utmost consideration, and particu-

larly in Montpellier before the outbreak of the dissensions, because of his fame which had preceded him, and finally settled in Toledo (Jan., 1305), the largest city of Spain. The famous German rabbi was received with joy by the Toledo community, and was elected to the vacant rabbinate.

Asheri made no secret of his hostility to all profane knowledge and he introduced a similar spirit in the Spanish capital. He could not at all conceive how admittedly pious Jews of Southern France and Spain could possibly occupy themselves with anything else outside of the Talmud. He thanked his Creator that he had saved him from the perversities of science. A man like him who had no comprehension of scientific pursuits and who was filled with aversion for anything that was not Talmudic could not but exert an influence inimical to science. In comparison with him, Solomon ibn Adret himself appeared almost a sceptic.

Determined to impress such an influential man into the service of his cause, Abba Mari appealed to Asheri to give his opinion on the question at issue. As was to be expected, Asheri heartily endorsed Abba Mari's zeal, and even expressed the belief that to confine the interdiction of science to young men only would not eradicate the evil. Inasmuch as all classes were infected with the poison of heresy, a synod should be summoned and pass a resolution that, outside of the Talmud, no branch of knowledge may be pursued either by young or by mature men. This uncompromising opinion held by an energetic, authoritative personality made an overwhelming impression upon the somewhat vacillating Spanish Jews. Ibn Adret who had hitherto hesitated to place himself at the head of the anti-science movement, now declared his readiness to pronounce the ban on condition that Abba Mari and Kalonymos of Narbonne draw up the text. An

officious obscurantist, Samson ben Meir, a disciple of Ibn Adret, volunteered to obtain the confirmatory signatures of twenty communities. The zealots counted particularly upon Toledo which was already greatly influenced by the spirit of Asheri, and upon the Castilian communities in general on the assumption that the latter would follow the policy of the capital and the leading community.

That the obscurantists constituted only a hopeless minority was soon evinced by the community of Montpellier which the followers of Abba Mari characterized as "Mount Zion." In this community the zealots dared not even solicit signatures for the decree of excommunication. Abba Mari who intimated to Ibn Adret that the entire community of Montpellier with a few exceptions, was behind him, now had to admit that Montpellier cannot be counted upon, and made concessions to the opposition party. But Ibn Adret who hated half measures and would hear of no retreat now became more rigid. He who hitherto had to be driven and urged now turned aggressor, probably under the influence of Asheri. On the Ninth of Ab, the anniversary of the fall of Jerusalem (Saturday, July 31), Ibn Adret and his rabbinical board, amidst a solemn ceremony, and with the scrolls of the Torah in their hands, pronounced a curse upon the study of sciences; anyone below the age of twenty-five who reads a scientific book whether in the original or in its Hebrew translation is excommunicate. This decree is to remain in force half a century. The Allegoristic interpreters of the Scriptures were included in the decree of excommunication, and their works were condemned and ordered to be consigned to the flames. As no exception was made in favor of scientific works written in Hebrew, Maimonides' philosophic works also fell under the interdict. Ibn Adret and his board permitted only

the study of medicine because the Talmud permitted it. This was the first inquisition in Jewish circles, with Solomon ibn Adret the inquisitor-in-chief. The Dominicans found apt disciples in Jewry. In the Middle Ages, however, each Jewish community was independent of the others and the decree of excommunication was valid only in Barcelona. But Ibn Adret took care that it be accepted by other communities, too. The text of the decree was sent to the communities of Spain, Languedoc, Northern France and Germany.

The other communities, however, were not so eager to accept the decree of excommunication. Jacob Tibbon and his followers got wind in advance of the intended stroke in Barcelona, and prepared a counter-stroke on their part that was to frustrate the effect of the interdiction of scientific studies. The Tibbonides of Montpellier, in their turn, issued a decree of excommunication against those who, because of religious scruples, would prevent their sons from studying any science in any language, who would speak disparagingly of the great Maimonides, and who would defame a religious writer because of his philosophic train of thought. Thus one anathema was opposed to another. Jacob Tibbon and his friends formally proclaimed in the synagog their resolution in favor of science and its standard-bearers, and the majority of the Montpellier community subscribed to it. But the partisan zeal of the Tibbonides led them to take a rash step that might have resulted in unpleasant consequences similar to those that were brought upon Jewry by the obscurantists a century before. As Jacob Profiat and some of his adherents enjoyed the favor of the governor of Montpellier, they sought to make sure of his assistance should their opponents attempt to introduce the excommunication of Barcelona by force. The governor declared

that he was interested only in one point, in the attempt to prevent the Jewish youth from reading anything but the Talmud. This attempt he would endeavor to frustrate by all means because, as he stated frankly, he would not permit the Jewish youth to be deprived by a decree of excommunication of all means that might eventually lead to their conversion to Christianity. The other points at issue were a matter of indifference to him.

Abba Mari and his small following were now in despair. As the decree of excommunication in favor of scientific pursuits was adopted by the majority of the community, it was, in accordance with rabbinic law, binding also upon the minority and its leader, and the latter could not legally submit to the Barcelona decree. The zealots, the prime movers in this controversy, were thus tied hand and foot; they were enmeshed in their own net. They did what little they could; they protested publicly against the decree of the Tibbonides. But they had to admit that they had sustained a defeat, and had to consult authorities as to whether or not the resolutions of the Tibbonides were binding upon them, too. Ibn Adret was similarly embarrassed. The opposition party believed or attempted to create the impression that the interdict of Barcelona included the works of Maimonides, and they appeared therefore as vindicators of Maimonides as well as champions of the glorification of Judaism in general, while their opponents, including Ibn Adret, were exposing Judaism to the ridicule of cultured Christians by their one-sidedness and obstinacy. The party that advocated the cause of science seemed to be gaining the approval of public opinion.

The Church, too, witnessed at this time a violent rupture between King Philip IV of France and Pope Boniface VIII; here, however, it was not a spiritual question, not one concerning science and

free criticism that was the subject of controversy, but solely one of domination, power and Mammon. The leaders of the two parties engaged in a life and death struggle. The king charged the pope with heresy, simony, greed, perjury and immorality; and the pope released the king's subjects from their oath of allegiance and presented his kingdom to someone else. The Jewish controversy did not have such significance, but it didn't have such fathomless depravity either. Several men who had signed the decree of excommunication, frightened at the possible consequences of the controversy, appealed to Abba Mari's party to conclude peace with their opponents. The two parties, however, persisted in their respective principles: the one that the study of the sciences must not be interfered with, the other that such study was pernicious, and must be kept from the Jewish youth. But while the followers of Abba Mari were still engaged in appealing to various rabbis to release them from the decree the Tibbonides had imposed upon them, a fearful storm broke loose that scattered the friends, and hurled the foes one against the other.